Labour Monthly

EDITOR R. PALME DUTT

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

MOBILISE THE PEOPLE

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Discussion Groups—Still Growing!

The number of the *Labour Monthly* Discussion Groups is still steadily rising. Each month we are able to report new Groups, but we have not yet reached our goal—our aim is 500. Are you sure you have done your best to form a Group among your friends and fellow workers? What about London? There is still a large number of towns in the London area that do not appear on our list. Let us see that when the October list is printed every town in London has its Discussion Group. LONDON—GO TO IT!

Space now forbids our giving a full list of Groups each month—a full list was given in our June issue. The following places are where Groups have been formed during the last two months only.

Abertillery
Alexandria
Braintree and Silver End
Bury
Byfield
Cardigan
Caterham
Catford
Chichester
Clapton
Crosskeys
Dartmouth
Didcot
Dumbarton
East Ham
Felinfoll
Gainsborough
Handsworth
(late Nth Birm.)
Hanworth
Hatfield
Hereford
Hornsey
Marylebone
Neath
Newton
Pinner
Rainham and Wigmore
Scunthorpe
Shawlands
Southampton
Stafford
Stamford Hill
Stone
Streatham
Stroud
Sunderland
Stepney
Walthamstow
Willesden Junction
Wood Green
Worcester

Besides the numerical growth of the Groups we are receiving excellent reports from all over the country of the value of the Groups, and in several areas *Labour Monthly* Lecture Rallies are being organised on the lines of the very successful Rally held in London on the 25th May.

GROUPS.—Do not forget the wonderful Birthday Gift. A complete set of bound volumes is too good to miss, so see that your Group is the lucky possessor. It is also not too late for new Groups to take part in this competition, so get your Group going now and take advantage of this offer, particulars of which can be obtained from this office.

Special Discussion Notes on each issue of the *Labour Monthly* are prepared by the Groups Department and sent to every Convenor. These form an invaluable basis for the study of each issue. These are also available to individual readers at the price of 3s. 0d. per annum.

Please address any enquiries to Discussion Groups Department, 134, Ballards Lane, N.3. We shall be delighted to help you.

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Notes of the Month

THE NEEDS OF THE HOUR

Urgent Practical Tasks—Anglo-American Declaration—Action or Inaction—To-Day, Not To-morrow—The West and the East—The Two Fronts Controversy—Empty Boasts—Passive Defence—Post-War Blue-Prints Passivity and Complacency—How Can We Help?—Reactionary Calculations—Fatal Delusions—Inescapable Risks—The Questions of Production—The Workshop and the Front—Political Necessities—Strengthening the Government.

URGENT PRACTICAL TASKS are now on the order of the day if the alliance of the British, American and Soviet peoples, representing and leading the peoples of the world, is to win a decisive victory over Nazism and Fascism. At the present time, eight weeks after the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union (for which the military experts of the West freely prophesied a complete Nazi victory and Soviet collapse in six weeks), and six weeks after the British-Soviet Alliance, the advance to effective common action still proceeds with extreme and menacing slowness. The main military front against the Axis Powers is still occupied, first and foremost, and almost exclusively, by the Soviet Union facing the entire brunt of the Nazi machine in Eastern Europe, and, in the second place, by the Chinese armies facing Japan in the Far East. The contribution of Britain is made in terms of air raids over Western Germany and the occupied territories, the naval blockade and the beginnings of economic and technical supplies to the Soviet Union. The contribution of the United States is made in terms of economic supplies and supplies of war materials, together with patrolling help in the Atlantic. It is manifest that this situation is far from a maximum concentration of all the forces of the anti-Hitler coalition for the most effective and simultaneous blows against Nazism. Hitler, although formally engaged against a coalition on two fronts, is in practice able to concentrate on one front and pursue his familiar strategy of dealing with one enemy at a time; the Nazi forces have been able to penetrate hundreds of miles into Soviet territory, both by reason of the treacherous initial thrust, before the Red Army was mobilised, and because of this free field to concentrate on a single front; the initiative still rests with the Nazi combination, which prepares a gigantic strategy of the offensive through France, Spain, North Africa, the Middle East and the Far East. This situation can only be met by the most active counter-measures in every field, and not by passive computations of the ultimately superior resources on the side of the peoples. The main task now is to find the means to make most promptly and rapidly effective in action the combined strength of the British, American and Soviet peoples, in unity with the European peoples struggling against Fascism, with the Chinese people and all the peoples of the world, whose unity in action can alone win speedy and decisive victory over Nazism.

THE ANGLO-AMERICAN Declaration announced on August 14 and the joint statement of Roosevelt and Churchill to Stalin, following the Hopkins Mission to Moscow, the Soviet-American economic agreement of the beginning of August and the Atlantic Conference of Britain and the United States, to be followed by the Three Power Conference in Moscow, constitute a series of positive and fruitful steps forward in the task of building the close alliance of the three foremost States and peoples united in the common aim of "the final

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destruction of Nazi tyranny." The importance of this achievement should not be under-estimated because the outcome still falls short of a completed alliance. The pace of lightning war leaves small room for political complexities; but in fact the political complexities have to be faced and overcome. The Anglo-American Declaration and the accompanying steps have brought the United States into very much closer association in the common front, into what is in effect a political, diplomatic and economic alliance for a common aim recognised as requiring military action. They have strengthened the position of Churchill and Roosevelt against the still powerful forces, subtle and underground in Britain, open and active in the United States, opposed to any combined front with the Soviet Union for the defeat of Nazism. They have dealt a blow beforehand to any diplomatic offensive of Nazism to disrupt the solidarity of the Western Powers or divide them from the Soviet Union. The recognition in principle of the aim of the right of self-determination of all peoples ("the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live") strengthens the fight of the European peoples against their fascist oppressors. The common stand constitutes a warning of the combined resistance against Japanese aggressive designs in the Far East. The plain affirmation of the co-operation of the three Powers enormously strengthens the world political front against Nazism, encourages and rallies every nation to resistance and influences the future policy of those States which have already been drawn into the orbit of Nazi Germany or are still vacillating on the brink. These are great gains and signal steps of advance in the political and diplomatic field. Above all, the proclamation of political and diplomatic solidarity and of the principle of close collaboration prepares the way for the urgent practical measures, in the field of supplies, strategic preparedness and action, which were the main subject matter of the conferences of the British and American representatives, of the subsequent conferences now in progress in Washington and of the further conference to be held Moscow, on the outcome of which heavy issues depend.

BUT IN WARTIME above all the test of the value of any political and diplomatic agreement is in the field of action. It it here that an ominous question mark hangs over the decisions of the Anglo-American Conference. Up to the time of writing (before Churchill's speech announced for August 24) no public statement has been made of the general nature of the decisions reached other than the proclamation of the principles of future peace aims. It is inevitable that the most important decisions, those in the strategic field, cannot be the subject of public pronouncement before execution. According to the Diplomatic Correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, the view is widely held that "the joint statement is merely the curtain to conceal more important decisions"; and a specific reference is made in this report to decisions of hypothetical military action in the event of further Japanese aggression in the Far East or of Nazi aggression, through the compliance of the Vichy Government, in North Africa. But on the question of action in the West the reports in the British press are silent. The American press has been less reticent:

> "Revelations from Washington that 'no British invasion of the Continent was contemplated at present' caused some caustic comment in military and political circles in London yesterday. The form in which these revelations were given indicated that they must have come from Congressional leaders who had a conference with the President on Monday. Though they did not quote the President directly, the reports convey the impression that the information came from him as a result of his talks with Mr. Churchill." (*News Chronicle*, August 20).

The "caustic comment" of London "military and political circles" was not directed against the decision of inaction in the West, but against the publication of the decision. Confirmation of such a decision was further afforded by the tone of the British official press, which, after an almost universal campaign

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protesting against inaction and demanding action in the West, piped down after the Anglo-American Conference, and by the further statements of Roosevelt referring to the decisive future campaigns of 1942 and even of 1943. The *Evening Standard* of August 19 reported a similar definite decision. This coincided with the most intense renewed Nazi offensive in the East, the cession of territory and important bases in the Ukraine and the threat to Leningrad. The most serious view must be taken of this situation.

THE GRAVITY OF a situation in which the Soviet Union is left to face alone the brunt of the entire military machine of Nazism, while the statesmen and commanders in the West placidly discuss the future campaigns of 1942 and 1943 and their post-war aims, needs to be brought to the sharpest public consciousness. In the last war the old Kaiser-Germany conducted its campaigns on the East against the millions of Tsarist Russia, in a protracted conflict which cost five and a half million Russian casualties, at the same time as it had to fight on the West the millions of the Armies of Britain and France; it had not the same control of the Continent; it was faced with a hostile Italy and a hostile Japan; the Allies were entrenched at Salonika in the Balkans. Yet in the face of all this the old Kaiser-Germany fought for four and a quarter years, with extending military successes, before the final collapse. Nazi Germany has a far more powerfully developed military machine; it controls the Continent, and is able to draw on the arsenals and industrial man-power of all Western and Central Europe; Italy, Spain, France and Japan are enrolled on its side. It is true that there are other factors in the picture which alter the analogy and exclude any pessimistic estimate. The Soviet Union is a very different Power from the old Tsarist Russia. The political situation in Europe prepares storms beneath the feet of the Nazi domination. But these factors cannot rule out the harsh military facts of the situation. Any light-hearted approach which fails to measure up to the scale of the conflict and the urgency of present action; which replaces the plain tasks of the present by future aspirations; which takes refuge in pleasant dreams of future American aid or the indestructible reserves of strength of the Soviet Union, in place of recognising that the most intense and critical point of the struggle is now and not later, that the present governs the future, and that the extent of the world conflict requires the maximum strength and endeavour of every people participating: any such complacent, idle approach is playing into the hands of Nazism and preparing a heavy and tragic disillusionment.

WHEN THE HEADLONG German advance in the West in the beginning of the last war was approaching the gates of Paris and threatening the collapse of the military resistance of Britain and France, the Allies appealed to Russia at all costs to intensify the offensive in East Prussia to relieve the strain; the Russians pointed out with truth that they were not yet ready in equipment; the British and French Governments renewed their appeals that it was necessary to act at all costs, irrespective of readiness and equipment, in order to relieve the strain; the Russians responded, and the outcome was the Battle of Tannenberg, the heaviest defeat of Russia in the war, but which drew off the decisive German divisions from the West and thereby saved Britain and France. Can the West do less in the far more critical issues of to-day? The main principle of the war on two fronts was understood and acted on in the last war, the principle referred to by "Strategist" in his article in the current issue "to support the ally fighting the main force of the enemy on one front through a decisive action on the other in order to wrest the initiative from the enemy or to oblige him through a strong diversion to withdraw forces from the principal battlefront for the protection of the newly menaced battle zone." That was and remains the only strategy of victory in a two-front war.

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THE DECLARATIONS OF Government spokesmen on the crucial question of the war on two fronts have shown a curiously halting, inconsistent and contradictory character. In the debate on production in the House of Commons on July 29 Shinwell alleged that the will to establish the second front was already present in the Government, but that the means and equipment were lacking, and that this was the real reason why no action was taken:

> "Why had we so far failed to render to Russia assistance of a substantial kind? Hon. members knew the Prime Minister well enough to realise that he would wish to create a substantial diversion on the Western front, throw our strength into the attack, and help to relieve our Russian allies. Why had the Prime Minister failed in that? He had the courage and the ambition, and the firm conviction of the urgent need for such an onslaught. Why was he so reluctant? Surely the answer was that he was without the means.
>
> "It might be right that we must conserve our resources because of the possibility of invasion, but the Prime Minister did not rely for final victory on defence alone. He more than any man was conscious of the need to attack if the enemy was to be brought to book. We did not enter the war simply for the purpose of defending this island."

The charge is here in effect made that all the productive resources, war material already produced, American war material and man-power are being preserved for possible future use for the defence of Britain against invasion, or for the Middle East and overseas defence of the Empire, but that none are available for fighting partnership with the Soviet Union. In reply on behalf of the Government, Bevin hotly denied that the responsbility for this lay on the side of inadequate production:

> It had been asked, "Why were we not helping Russia more?". Surely it was known that the problem facing the Army was in the question of taking the initiative. To imply it was because we had failed in production that we were not taking the initiative in a particular way on the Continent of Europe at this moment was a little unfair to the productive side; and it was unwise at this time when Russia was fighting for her very life to let her think for a moment that the British Cabinet were holding back in any effort that they could make. That was a mistake.

BY AUGUST 6, in the Parliamentary review of the war, Attlee had shifted the ground to declare that the second front had already been established, and that the war on two fronts was in being. When questioned where, he replied with magnificent simplicity,: "In the West and in the East." In winding up the debate, Eden went one further and affirmed that three fronts were already in being:

> "The Lord Privy Seal had spoken of a war on two fronts. That was true in the sense that there was already a war in the air and on the sea on two fronts. In actual fact there were more than two fronts. The Mediterranean was a third front."

To complete this complacent picture, on August 16 Sir Archibald Sinclair declared that victory would come by air raids, without reference to any military front, and that this would be their form of help to the Soviet Union:

> "It is the Bomber Command which is going to be the main instrument of victory. It is the bombers who are going to smash the war industries of Germany and break the will to win of the German people. The pressure which you exert upon the economic life of Germany will be a direct relief to the Russians in their battle in the East. If we go on hammering at the Germans in the West, the time will undoubtedly come, sooner or later, when the German people will insist that the High Command should bring back more aircraft from the eastern front to protect them and to counter-attack us in Britain. That will relieve the weight of the attack upon the hard-pressed Russians."

The conception of the necessity of a second military front in the West is here not merely dismissed from view for the present moment, whether on grounds of inadequacy of equipment, military difficulties or other grounds, but is dismissed from the whole perspective of the war. This is nothing but

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revival in a revised form of the old nineteenth century liberal conception of ritain fighting its European wars with the armies of other nations. The ex- erience of 1940, no less than of 1914-18, should have sufficiently demonstrated iat such a conception belongs to a vanished past.

WHAT DO ALL these varying declarations of policy, insofar as they can be regarded as representing any consistent policy or strategic conception, um up to as a total? It is obvious that the air raids on Western Germany and he occupied countries, however important as a component part in a total trategy, have not been able, and from their nature could not be able, to check or limit in any measurable degree the overwhelming Nazi offensive in the East. These declarations, taken as a whole, so far from inspiring the people to a naximum tension of effort in unity with the most gigantic battle in history on vhich their fate depends, are only calculated to encourage the attitude of a spectator and limited participant. Analyse them as a whole, along with a iundred similar official and semi-official declarations, and they add up to a otal: passive defence, a waiting attitude, expectancy of the enemy's blows; oncentration on self-protection at home against a possible future attack or nvasion, while the issue is being fought out in a most terrific battle elsewhere waged by others; speculation and boasting of future campaigns a year hence or wo years hence; general calls to increased production, not for immediate action, ut for such unspecified future aims, without reference to any immediate front.

ALONGSIDE THIS, in this hour of most intense crisis of action, there has come to the forefront another trend of symptomatic significance: the new spate of placid discussion of the post-war settlement of the world after victory. Committees are now set up by the leading governmental parties to prepare the blueprints, as if this were now the main problem requiring attention. Disquisitions abound how the rulers of the United States and Britain will kindly settle the fate of the world and restore order—after the Soviet Union has done the fighting. Federal Union re-emerges from the eclipse of its Anglo-French plans to propose a new blueprint of a federal assembly, in which the United States will control 27 votes and the British Empire 22 votes, with the Soviet Union excluded from this supposed "nucleus of world union" "so long as the present Bolshevist Government is in power." The facile confidence is spread that, with the Soviet Union in the war, and the United States helping, the war is virtually over, without any further need of special effort from the side of the British people. "The nations of Europe," declared Attlee in the House of Commons on August 6, "look to us, not only to destroy Hitlerism, but to show by practice as well as by precept the true alternative to Hitler's 'new order'." Possibly; possibly the peoples of Europe may prefer to find their own way; but the condition precedent in either case, the destruction of Hitlerism, is now dismissed with a contemptuous "not only." The questions of the post-war world are necessary subjects of present discussion, even though not the main subject; the main burning issue before the people to-day is the present action in the present urgent situation. But it is extremely dangerous if the impression is thereby created that the war may be regarded as practically already won and approaching its end, instead of entering into its most intense, critical and menacing phase.

CAN SUCH AN approach and policy and line of leadership, reflected also in the easy tolerance of admitted scandals of waste and disorganisation and under-production, the riot of vested interests, at home, be regarded as an adequate response to the urgent neds of the present situation, the colossal ordeal and sacrifices of the Soviet people, or the far-reaching offensive plans of the Axis Powers in every region of the world? The people of this country have

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been criticised for failing to understand the full urgency of the present situation; that, while applauding the achievments of the Soviet people, they have been satisfied to regard the concentration of the war in the East as as a welcome "respite" for the West; and that thus, in the midst of the enthusiasm and new hopes aroused by the Soviet stand, there are dangerous signs of passivity, complacency and slackened effort. There is a measure of truth in such charges and notes of warning; but in order to overcome such tendencies, it is necessary to place the finger on the crucial cause. Where there is passivity and complacency below, it is always the reflection of passivity and complacency above. General indictments of a people are no more justified than the similar no less easy explanations of every weakness of the labour movement by the apathy of the rank and file. The British people have never failed to respond to leadership. But to what are they asked to look for their aims and way forward to-day? To wait for invasion? Preparedness is excellent; but this is expectancy, not action; and it is preparation for defence, not to strike blows at the enemy. To wait for the campaigns of 1942 and 1943? This has no bearing on the present battle, on which the future of the world depends. To intensify production? Undoubtedly: but for what purpose? In order to participate in the battle, not as an alibi for the battle.

PREPAREDNESS IS NECESSARY. The intensification of production is the essential condition of any action. But all this loses its meaning if it is not related to a policy of action corresponding to the present issues. The people see the gigantic battle in the East on which so much depends. They wish to play their part and demand to know how most effectively to play their part. The demand grows for parallel action in the West. They may not be able to judge all the conditions and complexities of the problem. But they feel that something must be done. They are not convinced by the elaborate demonstrations that nothing can be done. They are ready to face the losses and the risks entailed in action. So far from lagging behind, this growing popular consciousness is ahead of those in control. The breaking of the moods of passivity is above all a question, not of exhortations and general appeals, but of policy and leadership and action such as can alone evoke the full response of the people. The tendencies to passivity need to be broken both below and above. The full strength of the British people needs to be brought into play alongside the Soviet people, to-day and not to-morrow, in the present hour of greatest crisis and also of greatest opportunity.

IT IS NECESSARY to speak plainly and brutally. Behind the passive attitude, behind the waiting policy, there are not only cautious, prudential calculations which in other circumstances would have their justification; there are not only traditions of routinism, the ponderousness of the official machine and the difficulties of adapting it to the new strategic needs of a basically transformed world situation: there are also in the background reactionary political considerations which have their influence in certain circles. The strongly entrenched reactionary forces which found their expression in Chamberlainism, and which view with no enthusiasm common action with the Soviet Union, have not disappeared, because they find it wise for the present to lower their voices; they are still powerful in the Tory machine (and not only in the Tory Party), in the Departments of State and in the High Command. They are content to view the terrific struggle of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union as a weakening of both; they are prepared to agree only to so much aid as may prolong the struggle rather than seek to bring it to its most rapid conclusion; they advocate a waiting policy for Britain and the United States, to pile up their resources and come in at the end, fresh and relatively immune from sacrifices, in order to dominate the settlement and govern the reorganisation of Europe. This view received

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open expression in the notorious declaration of the German Social Democratic Party Executive, who even in exile appear anxious to emulate the example of the Bourbons:

"From the Arctic to the Black Sea the world's strongest armies are locked in battle. Should one of the two achieve a quick victory, that army would henceforth be irresistible on the continent of Europe and Asia. It is only by exhausting each other in prolonged struggle that the nations of the Continent can be relieved of oppression, and that the power of Anglo-American Democracy can become the dominant factor in shaping a new World Order."

The cynicism of the big capitalist reactionaries is expressed here with a more blatant openness than they would themselves venture to parade in public.

SUCH A CALCULATION is not only politically reactionary from the standpoint of the interests of the people in the fight against Fascism. It is also tactically fatal from a military standpoint, independent of political viewpoints, if the aim is to defeat Hitler. The lull in the West is Hitler's weapon to enable him to continue his policy of dealing with one enemy at a time. It is the denial of the whole principle of the alliance. An alliance which is not based on the most active collaboration of both partners is doomed. Now is the time to strike every blow against Hitler, when he is most heavily engaged in the East. Now, when his reserves and available forces are most thinly spread in the West. Now, when the nations of Europe are looking for our action and the stirring of new life and struggle moves in them. To calculate that it will be better to wait while the battle is fought in the East, and to intervene later next year or in 1943, when British equipment will be more ample, when British and American production will be at its peak, is to indulge in that deadly form of myopia which sees only one's own side, one's own moves and intentions, and fails to take into account the moves of the enemy. Fascism is not passive. Fascism is already striking in the West, with the new Darlan coup, the establishment of a full fascist regime in France and the wholesale arrests. The July 14 demonstrations showed the readiness in France; but if we do not act, Fascism acts; if the flood-tide is not taken, delay may lose France to Fascism, and lead later to a far longer and more difficult struggle. Fascism is preparing its moves in Spain, in the Mediterranean, in the Middle East, in the Far East. Fascism is preparing its own second front in the Far East. What will be the situation in a year's time, if no action is taken now? If now, in the moment of greatest opportunity, of the most heavy involving of the Nazi machine in unexpected difficulties in the East, the conditions are judged too difficult for action, is it so certain that the conditions will be more favourable next year, if it should turn out that by then Hitler should be able to transfer forces to the West, should have organised more fully the arsenals of Europe for war production, and the war should have been extended to Spain and the Middle East and the Far East?

UNDOUBTEDLY THE PROBLEMS and difficulties and dangers in the path of achieving the most effective forms of parallel action in the West, of establishing the second front, are complex and formidable. There is no analogy with the last war, even though there are also certain favourable social-political factors which were not present in the last war. The question at the present stage is likely to be one of diversions rather than of decisive action. The public is in no position to judge the technical considerations which must govern any final decision. But what the people can demand and have a right to demand is that, on the basis of the fullest collaboration of the staffs of Britain and the Soviet Union, the most effective forms of action are taken to ensure that Hitler has in fact to face a war on two fronts. There is no mistaking the plain and emphatic call sounded again and again in declarations such as that of Litvinov:

"While helping each other, all participants in the common struggle must remember that he who gives in time gives twice. It is especially important that

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the fight be waged by all participants simultaneously and with the greate intensity of effort, not by one after another in turn. In all his calculations Hitle counted, and counts, on the possibility of smashing his enemies individually, on after another. Only by withholding this possibility from Hitler can a swift an decisive victory over the enemy of mankind be achieved."

It may be that diversions and actions, which in themselves and on any norma calculation would not be justified, which involve, not only risks, but the certaint of losses and defeats, may be essential and justified, if they thereby diminis the strain in the East, and thus constitute gains in the total strategy of the wa and a net strengthening of the strategic position of the alliance. It is necessary t face such sacrifices and losses with clear eyes, no less than the Soviet peopl face the terrific destruction involved in the scorched earth policy with un hesitating resolution. It is necessary to tackle also the problem of the enormou intensification of production which is the necessary counterpart of the policy of the second front.

IT IS IN this context that the question of intensified war production stands in the forefront of war issues and home issues for the British people. The question of production cannot be separated from the political and military situation. To call for the second military front without fighting at the same time with equal energy for the increased war production which can alone make i possible is political charlatanry. To call for increased production as the answe to the present urgent situation, without at the same time fighting for the second military front, is to play the ostrich. Intensified production is not a substitute for military action ; it is the indispensable auxiliary to military action. There is here at present a vicious circle. Weakness in the sphere of equipment and wa production is the strongest argument of the opponents of the second front. The weakness in production hampers the establishment of the second front. But the absence of the military front equally hampers the increase in production. The strongest incentive, the visible urgent need of the fighting front, is not able to operate, so long as there is no fighting front. Why is it that there is no such problem for the Soviet people, that the response of every man and woman is overwhelming to achieve miracles of production on a scale to put us to shame ? The reason does not lie merely in the difference of social systm, that the socialist system excludes conflicting sectional interests and enables all to produce for the nation and not for profits. This is a factor ; and undoubtedly sectionalism, disorganisation and racketeering above breed sectionalism, indifference and self-seeking below. But it is not the only factor. There is a still more elementary consideration, that the Soviet people are producing for a visible front ; the need is urgent, clamant, at their doors ; every shell, gun, tank and plane is a question of life and death for their millions of comrades fighting.

ACTION BREEDS ACTION. The workshop responds to the front. The establishment of the second front in the West would do more than all the exhortations and homilies in the world to arouse such a response from the whole nation in production as would leave all previous records behind. This does not mean that the one must wait for the other. We must break the vicious circle at both ends. We cannot wait for the second front in order to drive forward already by every means in our power the increase in production to make it possible. We cannot wait for the increase in production to establish at the earliest opportunity, and even at a risk, the second front. The same applies to the question of the organisation of production and the drive in the workshops, to the respective contributions that must be made by the Government, by the employers and by the industrial workers in order to overcome every obstacle to extended production. We drive at both ends, above and below, simultaneously. Disorganisation on top, shortage or delay of supplies, restrictive policies and monopolist interests discourage effort at the point of production.

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These evils must be ruthlessly tackled. But agitation against them remains only agitation, if it is not accompanied by the most intensive drive of the workers themselves in the factories, by their organised effort, to lead the way in overcoming every obstacle from their own side and achieving the maximum output. The politically conscious organised workers, the shop stewards and militant leaders in the big factories, enjoying the confidence of the main body of the workers and drawing them with them, have already been able to show how much they can accomplish also within the existing conditions to extend production. By so doing they place themselves in the strongest position to lead the fight simultaneously in the sphere of production as a whole, for the most efficient organisation of all productive resources for maximum output; and they place themselves at the same time in the strongest position to lead the fight for the most effective military action in fulfilment of the British-Soviet Pact.

IN THE POLITICAL sphere equally no less active measures are necessary to secure the fullest mobilisation of all the forces of the people for victory. The alliance of the peoples which can finally defeat Nazism is still in process of being built up. In this country it is necessary to establish the living national unity of the widest masses of the people, with the organised working class as the core and driving force, which can arouse a new spirit of initiative and response, drive forward the Government, defeat every reactionary force hampering the fulfilment of the British-Soviet Pact and the needs of action, and bring to the forefront in commanding positions new representatives close to the people. It is necessary to end the policies which can still play up to the influential secret friends of Fascism, which still protect from even the harsh breath of publicity the highly-placed allies of Hitler in the Red Book of Captain Ramsay, which still exclude even a Lloyd George, let alone militant democratic and working class representatives from the B.B.C., which still ban the only independent popular newspaper built up by the people themselves, the *Daily Worker*. It is necessary to establish effective popular contact with the European peoples struggling against Fascism through the tried anti-fascist fighters in their midst, who have been treated as criminals in the prisons and concentration camps. It is necessary to make a new approach to the colonial peoples to facilitate their co-operation in the common struggle. The interest of the peoples of India and Ireland and of all the colonial peoples, as of all the peoples of the world, is bound up with the victory of the peoples against Fascism; that interest is absolute and unconditional, and does not depend on any measures their rulers may promise or concede. But the greatest responsibility rests on the people of this country to do all in their power to lessen the obstacles to co-operation by such emergency measures as the release of Nehru and the political prisoners in India and the opening of direct negotiations with the National Congress, and the ending of the economic blockade against Ireland and the opening of negotiations with the De Valera Government to reach a basis of co-operation. The world alliance of the peoples against Nazi enslavement is still being built up; the more rapidly it can be built up, the speedier the final victory.

ALL THIS REQUIRES a new approach; the drawing in of new democratic representatives into controlling positions with the outlook, the understanding, the experience and the enthusiasm to be capable of assisting in carrying out the new tasks; the dropping of all passive reactionary elements which hamper their execution; and above all, the strengthening of the Government upon this basis. There is undivided support from the people for the Government upon the basis of its policy of the British-Soviet Alliance and the co-operation of the British, American and Soviet peoples for the defeat of Nazism. The general framework of the Churchill Coalition Government represents at the present stage the instrument most capable of mobilising the

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broadest national support around this policy. But the composition of the Government needs urgently to be strengthened, even within the limits of existing political possibilities, to make it more effective for the execution of the present tasks, and to bring it closer to the people. The initiative of the organised workers, and of the working class and democratic movement as a whole, has the special responsibility, within the broad national front for the common aim, to carry forward the most active campaign for those measures which can alone ensure the achievement of the common aim. Such measures include at the present point, as the most important: first, the establishment of the second front in the West; second, reorganisation at home, especially in the sphere of production; and third, the corresponding strengthening of the Government. Only so can the full strength of the British people be brought into action to play their maximum part side by side with the Soviet people in the present urgent situation so as to hasten the hour of the common victory.

August 22, 1941. R. P. D.

We should be glad to receive returned copies of the MAY and JUNE issues at this office.

"CRISIS OF THE BRITISH PEOPLE"

The increasing and well-known difficulties of the printing trade are creating unexpected obstacles in the production of the new material being introduced into R. Palme Dutt's forthcoming book, announced as justifying some further delay in publication in our last issue.

We fear we have already made too many promises and at this stage will not yet give a date for publication. We ask again, and again with confidence, for the understanding and patience of all those many thousands who have ordered copies. They will have no cause to regret it.

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Mobilise the People

by D. N. PRITT, K.C., M.P.

WE of the Left—like many other people—have had to take stock of the new situation created by the wanton attack of Nazi Germany against the U.S.S.R., which started on the 22nd June, 1941, and to determine our policy and attitude in that new situation. This is not easy, but it is much less difficult for us than for many others. We do at least know our ultimate object, and can avow it without deception; it is to carry the great mass of the British people with us in achieving Socialism; and to bring that about we have to aim at two other objects, the maintenance of the one Socialist state, the Soviet Union, and the destruction of Fascism, that arch-enemy of Socialism and of all progress, wherever and in whatever guise it appears.

Prior to the 22nd June, we were faced by the hard fact that the defeat of Hitler, if our ruling class retained its power in Britain, would of itself neither bring Socialism nearer nor put an end to Fascism; and we consequently opposed the Government and worked for its replacement by a People's Government, which could rid us of our ruling class, rid Germany of Hitler, and rid the world of the war.

But, after the attack of the 22nd June, the declaration of the Prime Minister on the evening of the same day, and the Soviet-British Treaty of Alliance of the 12th July, what is to be our attitude? There are, in my view, many points to be weighed before one can give a just answer.

Both the war and the peace are unquestionably transformed. The Socialist state is now in the war, and from a purely military point of view every advantage we can achieve helps her and every set-back we suffer is a set-back for her, too. The peace, moreover, which if our ruling class could have dictated it in the absence of the Soviet Union, would have been a piece of vengeance of capitalist oppression, is now bound to be very different. In the presence of the U.S.S.R., there can be no "super-Versailles," no Vansittartary, for she will be both determined and able to prevent such sabotage of the future happiness and prosperity of the world. It is extremely illuminating and encouraging to observe that—just as the Bolshevik peace declaration of the 8th November, 1917, produced such a flutter in the capitalist world that President Wilson's Fourteen Points had to be issued within about two months—the entry of the U.S.S.R. into the war has, in about the same period, brought about a reversal of the British policy of silence on war aims, and led to the very remarkable joint Eight-Point declaration of Roosevelt and Churchill of the 14th August. This declaration will have far-reaching effects. Not only is practically the whole of it unrealizable, and indeed unreal, unless we proceed to the Socialist state; but it will be of great value in checkmating any attempt of British or American reactionaries to "put over" a peace of vengeance.*

The position is thus fundamentally altered; but that does not of itself determine our course. To win the war with our own ruling class in power may not be a substantially unmixed blessing; but we have still to decide whether it can best be fought and won by opposing the present Government and seeking to drive it out, or by supporting it. What are the elements of debit and credit in that calculation?

Starting with the principal debit, we must realise that the Government is still an Imperialist, anti-Socialist, finance-capitalist Government, determined to hold on to the present system of power and privilege, no matter how terrible the cost. To offset that, we have the important fact on the credit side that this same government has definitely taken its choice and elected to stand by the side of the U.S.S.R. against Nazism.

In these circumstances, what would probably result from each of the two policies between which we have to

* It is significant that the one discordant note in the general Press welcome comes from Lord Kemsley, whom wealth rather than political understanding has placed in a position to influence public opinion. One must not call his Lordship and other such elements pro-Hitler. Scarcely anyone is pro-Hitler now; but one may be permitted, when estimating their political wisdom, to bear in mind the dates at which some of them ceased to profess admiration for him.

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choose, opposition and support? If we oppose the Government, we must seek to drive it out and replace it by a Left-wing Government; and if and when we have done that we shall have achieved a better Government, fitted to co-operate whole-heartedly with the Soviet people, to conduct the war and to frame the peace with nobler ideals and greater efficiency, and to make the Socialist state a reality at the earliest possible date. But opposition, whilst in the long run offering that great prize, has its dangers. In the first place, general public opinion, which plainly supports the vigorous prosecution of the war on the basis of the most generous fulfilment of the alliance with the U.S.S.R., is not yet ready to go a step further and demand a Left-wing Government. Opposition from the Left at this stage might therefore merely weaken the Government in the face of intrigues, which the fanatical and unscrupulous anti-Soviet forces inside the ruling class are carrying on in the hope of driving it out and replacing it by seven Munich devils worse than itself, who would proceed to manoeuvre for a "sell-out" with Hitler. There is, too, the simpler but equally serious danger that a weakening of the Government at the present critical stage—a Government which can, if pressure be maintained, be led to support the Soviet Union effectively—might lead to the military defeat both of ourselves and of the U.S.S.R.

If, on the other hand, we support the Government firmly and definitely, so long as it stands by the Soviet Union and carries on the war, we shall succeed—at any rate for a substantial period—both in keeping at bay the anti-Soviet and pro-Hitler Fifth Column and in maintaining the Alliance in being whilst an ever more real friendship is built up between the two great peoples of Britain and the U.S.S.R. And the more vigorously we support the Government in this new situation, the more difficult it will be for it to succumb to the temptation to grow lukewarm; we can, so to speak, encourage it with such vigorous slaps on the back that it cannot stand still, but will be impelled along the road we mean it to take.

When we consider all the facts and all the possibilities, with our eyes fixed on the one clear aim of preserving the Socialist state and achieving Socialism, there seems no doubt but that we must support the Government so long as it carries on the war with the U.S.S.R. against Nazi Germany. But, when we have made that primary determination we have not thereby settled more than the bare essential outlines of our policy and we have many problems still to face.

But we have at any rate made progress, and have learnt that, in facing our further problems, we have a great responsibility. Now that in so many important points we are shown to have been correct in our diagnosis and outlook whilst every section of political thought to the right of us has been wrong, our political importance is much increased, and in deciding upon our future policy and conduct we have to make doubly sure that the full weight of our knowledge and power is brought to bear in the right direction. The politically conscious people of this and every other country look to us to fulfil the responsibility of continuing to judge aright in what has become a war of the peoples against Fascism.

There are now only two camps—and woe betide those, Left or Right, who seek to create a third—the camp of Hitler-Fascism and of the Fascists and pro-Fascists of all countries on the one hand and that of the peoples of the world on the other. In such a position—at last clear-cut—the great masses of our people, too little accustomed to political thought have to be roused and inspired to take up the fight in the camp of the peoples. Who can best rouse them to the vital task? Clearly the mantle falls upon us of the Left, upon the growing mass movement which was formed with its core of Socialists some fifteen months ago and took definite shape at the People's Convention on the 12th January, 1941. This movement, based on the working-class and on other sections of the people who rallied to its programme, is the one body which can rally and strengthen the people to fight and win victory over Fascism. It and its founders before it are almost alone in having a clean record of continuous anti-Fascist activity and support of the Soviet Union, entitling it to appeal to the masses with confidence, to revivify existing working-class organisations, and to call for the great exertions and sacrifices which will be needed.

Great efforts are needed, for throughout the country we can see the aftermath of all that was reactionary and evil in the first stages of the war. There is mistrust and lethargy. There are the beginnings—although not to the same extent as in Germany—of ordinary non-

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political war-weariness, of an inability to look beyond day-to-day problems, and of a corresponding inability to solve any but those problems. There are signs, too, here and there of still more serious moods which may be exploited by the pro-Fascists, of whom some are silently waiting their opportunity, and others (not excluding M.Ps.) are openly attacking the Soviet Union and thus working to stultify or destroy the new Alliance. And, besides all these, there are vast numbers of ordinary men and women who have not yet been stirred from their customary routine of thought and practice, and made to realise that they can and must be conscious and active in destroying Fascism.

Against all these moods and tendencies the People's Convention can make the most effective appeal. A Vansittart can only appeal to the lower instincts of his countrymen while he confirms the masses of Germans in their support of Hitler; but the People's Convention can appeal to every heroic tradition in the struggle of the common people, to their internationalism, to their solidarity with the German people at present held down and oppressed by the Hitler gangsters.

How, then, in that situation, do we work out in practical detail the problems involved in our support of the Government with a view to winning the war and establishing the Socialist state? We cannot of course fulfil our duty by giving 100 per cent "door-mat" support of the Government; we must formulate and carry out a definite policy.

In the first place, our support of the war effort must be vigorous and positive; we must drive the Government to real action, checkmating those elements which want either to fight placidly to the last Russian, or to smile a calculating smile whilst the Nazi enemy and the dreaded exponents of Socialist achievement bleed each other to death. Our support must be no Yes-Manliness; if the Government will not go fast or far enough it must be pushed, and pushed forward, with no kid gloves.

A vigorous campaign must, moreover, be carried out for the removal from office and from influence of the anti-Soviet saboteurs that the ruling class naturally breeds; whether in politics or the Civil Service, in the Houses of Parliament or the country-houses, in the High Commands of the Army or of the other forces, they must go. The Government must be supported in extruding them; and if it will not do so, but prefers to "live and let murder"—pleading that the evil brood must be left undisturbed because, as the Prime Minister once said, "there are too many in it," it must be pushed once again with no ceremony.

And the whole of our well-known policy on the Home Front must be vigorously pursued. Better A.R.P., more civil liberty (including the right to read the Daily Worker), more Trade Union power, better wages and conditions, must be fought for and achieved. Such opposition is the only way to efficient government, to the maintenance of public health, morale and spirit, to the eradication of waste, inefficiency, and corruption from our industries, to the immense increase in our production which can and must be achieved.

In the mere matter of efficiency in production, we still have a long way to go. I am struck again and again, as I travel about the country, by instances of folly and waste in factory management, which a very little practical common sense or a little forethought could cure. Even in well-run factories the practical experience of the workers, particularly of the active and militant shop-stewards, can play a great part in introducing improvements; but the bosses, terrified by visions of "workers' control," insist that all such questions are for them and for them alone, under the magic label of "administration." (The total volume of production lost through this fetish is incalculable. I remember one relatively trivial instance where the various sections of one piece of work were directed to be entered on a card and checked by the office as they were finished; the practical result was that in the course of two days one skilled man had to go 175 yards to the office, get his card checked, and go back, more than two dozen times).

Both the main lines and the details of our policy, if my argument is right, are clear enough. Our responsibility is great, as is the crisis which confronts us; but hope is justified if we realise our responsibilities and live up to them. If we are to be fit to stand by our Soviet comrades in the battle, and to take our part in defeating Hitler, and fit again to stand by their side whilst together we build a just and lasting peace, we must throw off all complacency and lethargy, and see to it that not only the class-conscious workers but the whole mass of the people fight and work as never before.

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War on two fronts—the immediate issue

by STRATEGIST

THE gigantic battle in the East, a battle without precedent in history, rages for more than two months. The battlefield extends from the White to the Black Sea over fifteen hundred miles. The depth of the battle zone is also enormous and amounts in certain sectors to hundreds of miles. The greatest issues of mankind are at stake. The first socialist state of the world defends its people and territory against the onslaught of the powerful war machine of German Fascism, built up in previous years with the support of international capitalism and maintained at present by ruthless exploitation of the peoples of Germany and occupied Europe. Hitler wants to crush the Soviet Union before he starts his campaign for world domination. The liberty of all peoples, the future of mankind, the hopes of many millions of men and women for a world without wars and with an equal distribution of wealth and happiness are depending upon the final decision in this battle.

The military situation in the East is still in the balance. A third strong offensive has been launched during last month by the German High Command and the spearhead of the Nazi armies has penetrated farther into Soviet territory. Hitler urgently requires a success in order to keep up the morale of his army and of the dazzled German population. His propagandists cannot indefinitely deceive public opinion in the occupied countries or in Italy, Japan and Spain with faked and unverifiable statements about the destruction of the Red Army and Air Force, which is stemming as vigorously as ever the Fascist onslaught and is bombing back hard at Berlin. The German High Command has thrown fresh reserves of men, material and planes into the battle and seeks to gain a decision or to conquer at least one of the large cities in the Western part of the Soviet Union. The war machine of German Fascism is still a serious menace to the Soviet Union and the Allies. Great difficulties still lie ahead. Only the concentrated effort of all peoples and governments, which have pledged themselves to fight together until victory over the Nazi regime is accomplished will win the war and the gigantic battle in the East. The second front in the West is therefore an urgent issue.

The Red Army and the Soviet people have already mastered tremendous odds in the first two months of Hitler's Russian campaign. The German *blitzkrieg* strategy, the lightning surprise attack on the Soviet Union has failed. The Red Army has proved that the Panzer Divisions and dive-bomber formations of the German War machine are not invincible. So far the German army had won their campaigns in 1939 and 1940 by treachery inside the invaded countries and their armies, by superiority of men and material, and before all by air supremacy.

The Soviet Union, under Stalin's wise and great leadership, was prepared politically and militarily for the aggression of Fascism. The multi-lingual peoples of the Soviet Union had long ago been fused together into a united block of 193 millions of Soviet citizens, eager and willing to defend with their hearts' blood the socialist fatherland. There was no Fifth Column. Traitors and agents of foreign countries had been wiped out several years before. Under the direction of the three great soldiers of the Soviet Union, Marshals Voroshilov, Timoshenko and Budyonny, the Red Army has studied very carefully the experiences and lessons of the Spanish War and of campaigns in Poland, France and Greece and has changed tactics and training accordingly. The ever increasing output of the Soviet defence industry and heavy industry under socialist control and planning gave the Red Army, Fleet and Air Force the necessary material and equipment of excellent quality and in great quantities.

Upon the political and economic military strength of the Soviet Union and the strong will of the Soviet peoples to resist and to protect the achievements of Socialism are based the strategy and tactics of the Red Army. The strategy

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of the Red Army aims during the first phase of the war at the exhaustion of the material and man-power of the German war machine and at the protection of the political, industrial and agricultural centres of the Soviet Union in order to secure their normal functioning and production. The greatest battle of the world, in which millions of men and tens of thousands of guns, tanks and planes are struggling for a decision, is a battle of attrition. The German "break-through strategy", aiming at a swift conquest of Leningrad, Moscow and Kiev has so far failed. The impetus of the first and second German offensives has been broken. The third offensive was mounting to its peak in the last week of August; and was met in the Ukraine by a remarkable skill in manoeuvre and everywhere by fierce resistance. The timetables of the German High Command have been completely uptset. The German losses for the first nine weeks of the war amount to two million men and to 10,000 guns, 8,000 tanks and 7,200 planes. These are great achievements compared with Hitler's easy victories in Poland, France and Greece, or with the wishful boasting of the German propaganda machine when the German armies began their fateful invasion of Soviet soil.

The Red Army has found the answer to the *blitzkrieg*. It has developed tactics of its own according to the socialist structure of the country and to the experiences of the earlier campaigns of the war. The defence tactics of the Red Army are based on an elastic defence in depth, supported by an interlocking web of fortifications, cross-firing gun positions and tank traps, on swift and strong counter-attacks of mechanised forces and tank-supported infantry units and on organized guerilla warfare. In strong contrast to the Battle of France, in which the rapidly advancing Panzer Divisions caused panic and flight of French troops and civil population (an important town like Abbeville being taken with a motor-cycle company and a few tanks), the Red Army and the Russian workers and peasants stayed put and fought on against the German reserves and supply columns. The advanced German mechanised forces were either cut off by flanking counter-attacks of Soviet tank units from the main body of the army, or brought to a standstill or slowed down in their pace.

Three separate but interlocking battle zones are to be distinguished in the course of the battle:—

1st. The forward battle zone, sometimes more than 100 miles ahead of the infantry battle. Here swift and powerful Panzer units as well as dive-bomber and fighter formations struggle for possession of the main roads, the Germans trying to smash through or to fight their way back, the Soviets aiming to cut off the enemy and destroy him.

2nd. The main battle zone where German and Soviet army corps, composed of tank-supported infantry divisions and strong artillery formations are fighting amidst pill boxes, fortified positions, gun emplacements, burning villages and river banks. The aim on the German side is to join up the Panzer Divisions, while on Soviet side it is to stem the German advance and to dislocate the manoeuvring possibilities of the enemy. The Red Air Force is concentrating in this zone their main effort on bombing German reserves, tank columns and gun positions.

3rd. The rearguard battle zone where, after the burning of villages, forests and supplies, workers and peasants, supported by dispersed or cut-off small units of the Red Army, are waging organised guerilla warfare against the German communications, supply lines, reserves, isolated tank groups, headquarters and bases.

This new form of war, the perfection of the elastic defence in depth, combining the tactical elements of mechanised warfare, of the infantry battle and of guerilla fighting, placed before the German army completely new and unusual situations.

While the mechanised and infantry units of the Red Army, with the co-ordinated support of the Red Air Force are stemming vigorously the onslaught of the German Panzer and shock divisions, the guerilla movement has developed a new type of warfare in the rear of the armoured and motorised divisions. It has proved itself to be one of the most effective means ever discovered against the blitz strategy of Hitler and Seeckt, of List and Guderian. In strong contrast to the events in France in spring, 1940, when the Fascists within the French Government and High Command prevented, through their capitulation, the "levee en masse" of the French people, the Soviet guerilla war shows what an armed nation can do when it is invaded by the Fascists. It shows how ordinary men and women, in a moment of vital

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danger to their country, can become heroic military leaders.

Under the title "Ordinary Man Defeats Tanks," No. 27 of the *Soviet War News* has published a collection of episodes which are characteristic for the tactics which the daring Soviet partisans are employing in their merciless war against the invader of their homes, collective farms and factories, e.g.

> They raid aerodromes. "Guerillas recently attacked a German aerodrome and captured six Heinkel planes. They burned five and the sixth plane was flown by the tractor driver and Aero-Club instructor Solin to the Soviet lines. The guerillas also blew up underground fuel tanks, put out of commission the landing ground and set all the buildings on fire. They carried away a small radio station, five motor cars and trucks and seven motor-cycles, all in good order. Twenty-five German air technicians, radio operators and privates were killed during the raid.

The superior tactics of the Red Army and the heroic resistance of the Soviet peoples have destroyed the stupid hopes and vain promises of Hitler to win the war in 1941. Amidst the German onslaught against the Southern Ukraine, *Pravda* of August 10th draws the following picture of the situation:

> "Fierce battles between the Soviet and Fascist troops are in progress along a vast front. It is now becoming increasingly obvious that the German "blitzkrieg" against the Soviet Union suffered a failure. Hitler never before encountered such a formidable enemy as the Soviet Union. Before the war with the Soviet Union he did not know of war on two or more fronts. The thrust against the Soviet Union is acquiring a clearly protracted character. Even if the enemy is still strong and formidable, even if he has not yet exhausted all his possibilities, he is nevertheless doomed and will be destroyed."

In the gigantic battle of attrition in the East, the Red Army drains away Germany's man-power. Losses of two million men cannot be sustained on the long run, cannot be sustained on the long run, especially as they have decimated the shock troops of the German army, composed of the cream of the Nazi youth. The German High Command has been obliged to send to the front line divisions comprising men of older classes whose morale is certainly not so high and whose military value is greatly inferior to that of the shock troops. Besides the ratio between trained and raw reserves in Hitler's army is one to three. Professor Zvavich estimates in No. 25 of *Soviet War News* the number of all man power reserves of the German army between the ages of 18—40 at approximately 5½ million men. "By drawing on the men older than 40, i.e., by straining all the man-power reserves, approximately 7 million can be mustered."

The air offensive of the R.A.F. against the German industrial and shipbuilding centres in Northern, Western, South-Western Germany and Berlin, which is now seconded by the Red Air Force as the nights have become longer, begins to cripple the output of the German war production and to undermine the morale of those sectors of the German population who believed in the vaunting prophesies of Hitler and Goering. Soviet aviation hammers continuously on the oilfields of Ploesti and the German-controlled ports on the Black Sea, and has so far destroyed more than one million tons of fuel, the essential combustible for mechanised warfare.

Two months' battle of attrition in the East have affected Hitler's war potential to a considerable degree. The decrease of shipping losses in the Battle of the Atlantic is not only the consequence of certain defence measures of the U.S.A. navy, but also the merit of the Red Fleet, which sunk either by mines or by direct action, within 44 days between June 22nd and August 4th, no less than 13 German submarines. The heavy losses of the German Luftwaffe in the East have obliged the German High Command to withdraw from the West a larger part of their bomber and fighter force than was previously expected. The German air Ministry has been obliged to acknowledge that, on account of the heavy strain on the aviation in the East, retaliation bombing of Britain had to be temporarily suspended.

All these facts go to prove that Hitler is faced by serious problems. The military situation is most favourable for the immediate creation of an active second front in the West. But unfortunately the slogan from Hammerfest to Boulogne seems to be "All Quiet." It is a common principle of strategy in a two front war to support the ally fighting the main force of the common enemy on one front through a decisive action on the other in order to wrest the initiative from the enemy or to oblige him through a strong diversion to withdraw forces from the principal battle front for the protection of the newly created second front.

This strategy guided the decisions of

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the Allied War Council during the first world war. While the German armies were pressing during the second half of August and September, 1914 through Belgium towards Paris, and later towards the Channel ports, the famous Russian "steam roller" was slowly moving into East Prussia and Galicia. The two army corps which the younger Moltke dispatched at the end of August, 1914, from Belgium to East Prussia arrived too late for the battle of Tannenberg; but he missed them in the West, for they would have closed the famous gap between the armies of von Kluck and von Buelow, through which Joffre threw his last reserves for the bold counter-attack which decided the battle of the Marne and changed the whole strategic situation. When Field-marshal Mackensen invaded Serbia in Autumn, 1915, the French army launched its first counter-offensive in Champagne. The battles of Verdun and the Somme were co-ordinated with each other, and with Brussilow's big offensive in Galicia. The first stage of the Battle in Flanders in summer, 1917, was timed with Kerenski's attempt to carry through an offensive operation in Eastern Galicia. While Foch was leading his armies towards Belgium and Lorraine in the autumn of 1918. General Franchet d'Espery was advancing in the Balkans up through the Vardar Valley towards the Danube Basin.

During the Spanish War, the Republican Central General Staff was carrying through diversion operations so far the limited war material allowed. The Battle of Brunete and the two attempts to take Zaragossa in the late summer of 1937 must be considered as diversions in order to relieve the pressure of the Italian Expeditionary Force against Santander and Asturias. The most famous and successful diversion of the Spanish War was the battle of the Ebro. Here the bait-attack of Modesto's army across the swift and broad Ebro menacing the vital communications from Aragon to the Mediterranean succeeded completely. Franco was obliged to stop immediately his strong offensive towards Valencia and got involved into the most extensive and expensive battle of attrition. It took him almost four months to liquidate the Ebro bridge-head, which had proved a thorn in the flesh of the Fascist army, and a most dangerous thorn.

The immediate creation of a second front in the West should be the task on which all energies of the Imperial General Staff should be concentrated. Now and not in Spring, 1942, is the big occasion. The German war machine is heavily involved in the greatest battle of attrition in history. The strain on troops and material is tremendous. They should not be given time to recover during the winter months, when weather conditions are limiting air activities and consequently decisive actions for a considerable period.

During the month of July almost the entire British Press, from the *Times* to the *News Chronicle*, was taking up the lead given by Frank Owen in the *Evening Standard*, and was demanding strongly active support of the gloriously resisting Red Army. The air offensive of the R.A.F., and the first shipments of war material from Britain and the U.S.A.—welcome as they are—were rightly considered insufficient. Mr. Shinwell declared in the supply debate in the House of Commons at the end of July that the Prime Minister was advocating a strategy of full and active support of the U.S.S.R., and that Churchill "would wish to create a substantial diversion on the Western Front."

Surprisingly enough, almost coinciding with Mr. Churchill's trip across the Atlantic to meet President Roosevelt, this theme, which had a profound echo in the mind of the British people, dropped out of the Press discussion. A new subject, cherished by the Diehards of the City and Wall Street and the friends of Lord Ironside and Archangel round about the War Office—the same sinister circles which were conspiring with Weygand in the early winter of 1939—1940 for an attack on the Soviet Union—has appeared in the Press. Baku has become the new catch-word. Those who wanted in 1940, the conquest of the Soviet oil fields are talking now, in 1941, of their protection against a possible German attack. Even the "Evening Standard," which so far was leading a strong and welcome campaign for a diversion in the West, hints on August 12th

"(Baku is the central and immediate prize in this battle for the world. Happily this is the one area in which British and Soviet power are not forestalled from making a junction)."

That Whitehall has decided for an "All quiet on the Western Front" and that the Imperial General Staff is considering the reinforcement of the Imperial armies in the Middle East. Wishful thinking of certain reactionary groups who still dream of a British control over

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the oilfields of Baku is combined with the bad estimates of those generals and politicians who are even now grossly underestimating the resistance power of the Red Army and of the Soviet peoples.

Other strategists are suggesting an expedition to Northern Norway in order to occupy Narvik and to cut off the iron ore route along the Norwegian coast. They refer to the successful raid on the Lofoten Island and the growing discontent of the Norwegian people. They have, however, forgotten the lessons of the Norwegian campaign of spring, 1940, which failed, not only because it was badly prepared and carried through with insufficient strength of man power and material, but mainly because the R.A.F. was unable to establish air-supremacy over the battle-field. The same problem exists to-day. It is not a question of air strength in general, but the difficulty of getting and holding landing grounds for the fighter squadrons in Norway, which cannot operate because of their limited flying time from British aerodromes. To support such operation during its first stage with fighter planes from aircraft carriers would undoubtedly involve too many risks.

Air supremacy, however, argue the strategists who advocate the invasion of the Channel coast, is one of the essential conditions for the success of a diversion on the continent in case a bridge-head would be established along the coast belt of Belgium and of the French Pas de Calais. Here the fighter squadrons would have the opportunity to operate from British aerodromes. Here a strong bomber and fighter force could be easily maintained in order to protect the landing operations and later the bridge-head against German counter-attacks.

It depends on the amount of material and on the shipping space how strong such landing forces would be, and how far they would be able to push on into enemy occupied territory. It would seem, however, certain, according to the advocates of a continental operation that with decisive support from the air, a bridge-head comprising the coastal sector between Antwerp and Boulogne, including the towns of Ghent and Courtrai, could be held against enemy counter-strokes. It is argued by advocates of this type of operation that it would be possible, given the necessary backing on "the production front," to extend the operations on Brussels and the French industrial centre of Lille, and that the British troops would undoubtedly find in the Belgian workers and the French miners of the North the most valuable allies in their fight against the German occupation army.

The numerous rivers and canals in this district would make the defence organisation of the bridge-head considerably easy and increase the difficulties for the German counter-attacks. The German garrisons of Belgium and Northern France are not strong enough to carry out decisive counter-actions. Their task would be to fight the popular movements which undoubtedly would set in the main industrial districts of Belgium and France. The latest demonstrations in Paris are a proof of this. The German High Command would have to move troops and above all air squadrons from the Eastern Front to the Channel coast in an attempt to re-establish the situation. That would mean a slowing down of offensive operations in the East and counter-offensive possibilities for the Red Army. The difficulties for Hitler would immediately increase considerably.

Whatever is the most suitable strategy in this matter has, of course, to be decided in the light of the best knowldge in the possession of military experts. But whatever be the decision, it is clear that it must depend largely on something outside the ground covered in this article, namely on developing production in Britain itself. This is a key factor.

Given this factor, the advocates of establishing a bridge-head on the continent are certainly right in not waiting for such an operation until next spring. Now is the chance to establish a second front in the West. The peoples of France and Belgium are waiting for the allied armies. The repercussion in all occupied countries and in Germany itself would be immense. Hitler could not recover this winter from the terrible losses of men and material in the East. He would be obliged to fight on two fronts what he always feared so much. The quicker the second front in the West is established, the quicker the tide will turn in Europe, the quicker Hitler will be smashed and the oppressed peoples be liberated.

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How To Increase War Production

I.—The Campaign in the Workshops

by COUNCILLOR JACK OWEN

THE new situation demands that the most active attention of militant minds be focussed on the factories. Production becomes the key question in relation to the drive for a Second Front in the West.

And the test of our activities in this direction will be shown by the concrete result in terms of increased production of war material.

We should welcome this, for I believe this new attitude is in line with the training necessary for the workers to "take over" ultimately. We of the militant section have been put on our mettle in a way not possible before. Now we are confronted with the responsibility of "delivering the goods" in concrete form; in the shape of cartridges, shells, guns, tanks, planes, and all types of equipment required by the modern army, as well as the production of the tools required for the manufacture of these things.

This is our task, and the urgency of the situation requires results NOW.

Political mental reservations are impermissible when one reflects that by the time this is in print the total casualties of both the German and the Russian armies will be in the neighbourhood of three million.

To get some idea of what this figure means, reflect that if such an army of men, walking at the rate of four miles per hour, were to march past a given point, it would take a week and a day (going night and day) before the last man passed. Assuming one-third of this number to have been killed, if the bodies were piled on a base 12 foot square, they would make a column nearly nine miles high.

And the majority of them would be working-class lads. Our danger is the failure of the workers of this country to fully understand the strength and menace of the German military machine. In spite of the stories of the Press it must be realised that the countries Hitler has conquered are additions to the strength of his reserves. This fact, coupled with the very dangerous tendency to rest on the Russian oars, a tendency which will be encouraged by the fifth columnists in high places in this country, although a political condition is, paradoxically enough, our first major problem in the field of industry.

Once we get the average worker to realise the burning urgency of the position, our production problems are the more easily solved.

The number of countries backing Hitler would show that not everybody considers we are on a certainty. Study the position of Japan. Her statesmen are making, or by now have made, an attempt to "spot the winner." There is no sentiment in power politics, and if Japan, say, decides to row in with the Axis, it means that in their considered judgment Germany is likely to be the winner, or at any rate not going to be a bad loser. Japan will, therefore, put her money on Germany. That, baldly, is the situation, with Spain and Portugal still studying form.

This matter of getting our mates to see the thing in its stark nakedness must be our first and major job. If we create such a political background for the workers' thoughts, then, what appear to-day to be complicated industrial problems, will prove "but mice after the groaning of the mountain."

Our second big task is in our own mental approach to all the problems requiring solution.

That this is important is revealed by the fact that though militants, as a whole, have adapted themselves with praiseworthy rapidity to the new situation, largely due to the unifying influence of our sympathy with Russian ideals, yet, in the majority of the factories, whilst the goodwill is there, doubts on the practical steps to be taken are impeding the rapidity of the move forward.

Our attention should be directed, al-

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most exclusively, to movement that will affect the whole of the workers in a factory, or in a department, rather than consideration of the increased efforts of individuals.

With your permission, I want to go into detail on this point, for I believe it to be fundamental to the successful solution of increased production.

We militants are the driving force and it is our duty to master, fully, the correct mental approach to the problem. The output of the entire shop must be the target, and we should not allow our aim to be deflected.

Hitherto we have been accustomed to estimate our strength in terms of the number of militants in the shop. This will suffice no longer. All our suggestions to-day must be examined in the light of the probable reaction of the *whole* of the workers in the shop.

Many shop stewards will read this article, so let me put the point in this way:—When a dispute is going on in a factory, the shop steward who is about to interview the management, makes a quick estimate of the strength of feeling on the matter under dispute, and marshals his arguments accordingly.

Generally speaking, his estimate is based on the feeling expressed by the more militant members of "his flock."

But let there be an idea that the dispute means a stiff fight ahead which might involve a down tools, and the stewards' mental approach is entirely changed. He bases his estimate, now, upon the feeling of the entire shop, giving more attention to the probable reaction of the weakest members. He thus obtains a more truly objective appreciation of the possibilities of success.

So we, too, must accustom ourselves to this "larger outlook."

Success in getting a move on in the shop is largely conditioned upon our relationship with our mates. In this connection it is, in my opinion, necessary to sound a warning. We militants feel, intensely, the new situation. All the terrific strain our Russian comrades are undergoing—the danger threatening the workers of this Island of ours, all this impresses us deeply by the very reason of the faith within us. But frankly, urgently, we must realise that success in our new venture means that essentially we must be, first and foremost, realists. I do not wish for a moment to weaken the flaming enthusiasm of comrades, but I do feel, so deadly seriously, that if we are to succeed, we must have a very clear picture of the *average* of political development in the shop we are working on.

I believe organisation of the work in the shop will prove the most fruitful method.

The problem is two-fold—immediate results, that is results to-day; this very hour; and preparation for the increase of to-day becoming a steady flow to-morrow, increasing as it flows. That is the task, and we can examine it in that order. Dividing the problem in this way under two heads of immediate increase and having the foundations for a steady increase suggests the sub-division as occupational in the first case, and organisational in the second. The first concerns improvements of method on the job and affects the individual craftsman, the second has regard to the methods of the shop as a whole. Improvement in the tool "layout" of a job would be a question of the first, and planning, processing, ventilation, etc., would be a matter of the second. We must not make the mistake, however, of separating these two other than formally, for they interlap pretty closely.

Let us begin to detail the first question of immediate increase. There is tremendous goodwill towards Russia amongst the workers and this will help us considerably in our work. I do not anticipate a great deal of difficulty if we only watch our step and steadily make our mates get the angle that this is a joint effort—that our own danger is very great—that we and the Russians are in this together. I stress this because we must face it frankly that up to now the majority of the workers do not, as yet, appreciate the urgency of the situation and our success in getting the craftsman to put out individual effort is conditioned upon our creating for him the correct political background. The workers watch, pretty closely, the actions of the militants, and this gives us one opportunity. I, myself, favour our own individual and steady increase of work—but quietly—not in the sense of "tearing things up": that will never do.

You know the name we have for that sort of individual in the shop. He is associated with price-cutting and we cannot eliminate that feeling towards him, even amongst ourselves, in the first five minutes. But a quiet going ahead will undoubtedly have a marked effect for, such is the interest in the work of the Communist Party, and such is the influence of their members, that they all

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know their intentions and steady application to them will carry weight. Here, however, is the crucial circumstance; take a shop that I know very well. In one section there are 150 skilled men. All of them are decent fellows, and have at the present moment a tremendous good-will towards Russia. They are thoroughly appreciative of the fact that our respite from bombing can be attributed to the magnificent resistance of the Russians. In this section there are three Communists. Suppose the three Communists decided to "tear it" in order to show an example. Ignoring, for the moment, their probable subsequent isolation, if the three Communists tear it to the extent of doing say, 50 per cent more, that is to do an extra five hours' work in a ten hour day (and they would have an exceptionally good price on the job to be able to do this, and it certainly wouldn't last), the total gain would be the equivalent of 15 hours extra work, plus the development of bad feeling in the shop. Whereas, assume we got all the men to do extra work equivalent to only five minutes extra each hour of the ten hour day, the total gain would be nearly ninety hours equivalent work increase. And what, perhaps, is of much more importance, we would have created a feeling in the shop which would render further improvement easy of accomplishment. So one of our first jobs is propaganda, and as we should be as good at this as we are, presumably, at our jobs, we should not have a great difficulty in this direction. We have the good-will of our audience, and no doubt the Party will be helping with material, so ahead we go! One little hint, though. I heard it said of one place, that they were doing so well that "they were making 500 per cent."

Now, I confess, myself, to a momentary feeling of dismay. All my life I have been accustomed, as you will have, to looking at "overbooking" as a workshop crime, and to put the splendid response of those workers in this way is, to say the least, tactless. I will deal with the question of piece prices at a later stage, but thought this interjection necessary now.

In this connection of individual effort, the old slogan of the engineering shops is very sound: "Don't work hard—work fast." There is a lot in it. Our basis for immediate increase might very well be along the lines of the establishment of a departmental "workers' production Committee." This is organisation as it should be—right on the job. If possible, the shop steward should call this together and also be its chairman, but the aim should be to draw in as many as possible. Remember, the successful method of the Russians in getting as many as possible interested in any given problem. It helps to keep enthusiasm alive, for we must build to last. If the 600,000 members of the A.E.U. alone were to put on a spurt, equivalent to an extra five minutes of work per hour, on a 60 hour week it would yield extra work to the equivalent of 47 fully equipped fighter planes, or three million aircraft "cannon" shells.

I favour a committee, because it is our traditional method of organisation and because many men do not themselves like approaching the foreman on such matters. But the central idea is to suggest improved methods of production by co-operation, for tremendous results can thus be quickly obtained. The slogan should be: "The workers are going to give and *take* a hand." Such a committee would work directly with the foreman. Delays, as is usual with deputations to the management, are thus avoided and in any case you, too, are working on the immediate job and know most about it!

Now many foremen (far too many) are just stupid beings in matters of welfare and the handling of men. I have come across a number who, for example, object to singing in the shop. They think that it is a reflection on their ability to maintain discipline. They must be stamped on, and quickly. A Government publication, "Emergency Report No. 1" on "Industrial Health in War," gives many examples of aids to production and amongst them, singing together is given as one, and a rest period of five minutes in every hour as another. This latter applies particularly to repetition work. Many in authority have incredibly stupid ideas about these innovations and it will be our task to see that they rise to the occasion, as we are doing.

I believe that once the worker gets enthusiastic, he will devise many aids to production, for I have a profound faith in the virility and intelligence of our class.

There are many jobs in the shop which lend themselves to quickened production by the co-operation of one or two workers. For example, two mates working on lathes side by side often have a run of jobs where, by splitting up the operations and doing a part on each machine, output can be increased greatly. This

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used to be a favourite method of mine when the price on a job was bad, and I could get the foreman to agree. In one shop I used to work a lathe which had a very ingenious method of screw-cutting, whilst the mate next to me was on one without even an index. What more sensible than that, if he got a job involving a good amount of screwing, we split the job between us and I do the screw-cutting part of it? I have made many a "bright quid" by this method from jobs reputed to be bad payers. Here is something you on production can "get going on" right away. If the foreman does not respond (and he is stupid if he doesn't, for it is to his advantage), then treat him in such a way that he comes to see reason. You know how to deal with such an unconscious fifth columnist.

If we start in this way, it does help to remove what is a danger fostered by the "leftist" type of person, that is, to just criticise the management and refuse to do anything until the cause for the criticism has been removed. A production committee which has not its roots in the departmental work will be prone to this attitude. Working in the way advocated will foster in the worker constructive ideas which later can have most revolutionary effects.

A labourer engaged solely to take and bring tools from the stores, thus saving the craftsman's time; the provision of seats for tedious work; the loaning of special tools to each other and the breaking down of the system of the "old hands" having all the best tackle; all these are matters that directly affect production on the job and can be dealt with quickly.

These examples, of course, deal with engineering factories, of which I know most, but it should be obvious that the principle is applicable to most trades. I feel that working in this way is most sound because in the departments will arise concrete problems requiring solution. It is, in my opinion, a better way than first establishing "production conferences" which will tend to argue from ideals of production downwards.

It is better to work upwards and then the production conferences can grapple with the actual difficulties which have arisen in the shops.

One stumbling block to individual effort to-day is the fear that in going ahead in this way we are inviting price cutting and also helping the boss to make more profit. Now I know it is not easy for us to get this new situation clearly before us in the first few moments. But sit down in a quiet corner and "have a good think." Think over the terrific power of Hitler—of his efficient organisation—of the fact that his soldiers *are* fighting efficiently and fiercely—think of his threat to this country—picture the agony that would be ours were his tanks to ride roughly, cruelly, over all that we treasure, and the difficuty of price cutting will not loom so large on the horizon. This is not "sob stuff"; it is stark truth. Actually, price cutting is not such a big bogy. There exists a very definite agreement in this country that prices are not cut unless the method of production has been altered at the instance of the boss. Co-operation by the process of splitting up jobs is not an alteration in the sense of the agreement. In any case, I think, where a department is going ahead, a departmental extra bonus is certainly permissible. I know the arguments against, but—we are not all Communists, yet.

I can, however, see a real difficulty arising in the piecework shop which must be dealt with. Every experienced worker will agree that in most shops there are a number of good paying jobs and many more not so good. Usually the "old hands" get all the "sweets," and a condition will arise in the shop that is abolishing the limit, where some men will go out with a very heavy pay packet and others with packets comparatively light. This will be a bad situation, and I know nothing so calculated to cause dissatisfaction in a shop as wide differences in the pay packets of men in the same department engaged in the same trade.

I suggest the correct remedy for this is to pool all prices of work done, to pool all the times taken, and to divide the difference equally according to the time put in and the rate paid, so that men who are on merit award will get their true proportion.

I know there is a prejudice against pooling systems, but I think this is due to our experience of the so-called profit sharing and pooling systems run by the boss, which usually leave you guessing as to the amount you are going to draw. The system I am advocating is to be supervised by the men and there are to be no additions placed on the costs by the boss. It is a straight pooling of all effort and a straight pay-out on that basis. After all, the man who has drawn a big bonus because of good prices, must realise that those good prices remain so

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because of the strength of the organisation of the whole of the shop. On many jobs such as "Auto" jobs, where group working is in operation, the workers themselves have introduced such a system.

Its advantage from the point of view of preventing individual slacking should be obvious.

With regard to the question that we are merely making bigger profits for the boss, well, for the time being, that is no doubt true. That is the price we have to pay for not having earlier dealt with the existing system. But at this moment the vital question is to drive forward with production, even though it be within the existing economic system. Later on, with the movement growing, we shall be able to deal with this sort of thing.

Immediate effort, then, is a question of getting the worker to realise the gravity of the situation; of our showing, by quiet example, our own working harder; of teaching co-operative shop effort in all ways that will save time as well as material; of the cultivation of the team spirit, together with welfare suggestions calculated to foster this spirit and to fight to reduce the two enemies of production, fatigue and boredom.

The second question, that is, organisation for the production of a steady increase, renders itself more readily to committee work. Here contact can be made to the management through a committee drawn from every department. Larger questions here deal with the welfare side such as the smooth running of the canteen, ventilation, arrangement of the hours of working, nights "off," etc. Here, too, will come those vexed questions such as the tolerances on jobs. Managements will possibly claim this as their business, but you and I know that there are thousands of jobs in the shops where the "tolerance" on a job is set at a ridiculously fine limit, often just at the whim of the draughtsman. And we both know, too, what this means in increasing the time taken on the job. I know of one job now where the limit on the tool is set at one ten thousandth of an inch, and yet the part to be made has a clearance in the job it fits of five thousandths of an inch. We must go forward with demands that this sort of business must be stopped. But it is important that we go forward in the spirit of constructive criticism. We owe that to our movement. We must make sure, too, that our criticisms are well founded. We are all proud of our class, we are sure that they will make a good job of the new move. I have tried to avoid the impression of creating a "blue-print." All I want in the space at my disposal is to suggest lines of development. The second part is sketchily done because of reasons of space, but this phase lends itself to the more constitutional methods of approach and need not be laboured.

The main conclusion is clear: that questions of organisation and the production drive as a whole require to be seriously tackled by the workers themselves: and that, *if done in conjunction with the drive for positive action to form a Second Military Front* and to fulfil the Anglo-Soviet Alliances, they are essential for the victory of the peoples over Fascism.

There is plenty of literature on the subject of production, and leaders should make its acquaintance as rapidly as possible. My own reaction to the new move is that I feel tremendously encouraged by it, for I recognise that it means a preliminary study by the workers, fitting them for the inevitable and glorious day when they take over and step into their own.

II.—Organising Production

by JOHN AUSTIN

PRESIDENT Roosevelt, it is said, has the difficult task of using an eighteenth century constitution for twentieth century purposes. Much of the British Governmental paraphernalia dates from the middle ages. But the necessary counterpart to individual enthusiasm and self-sacrifice in the national effort to maximise production is a really effective administrative machine. No one is satisfied with the existing set-up which is an anachronistic legacy from the past patched up to do some sort of service in totally changed circumstances. While it may be impossible, within the capitalist framework, to achieve quite the same logical and straightforward structure that our socialist allies possess, we can nevertheless achieve much more than is yet being done. Clearly the first requirement is to decide what is wanted. In wartime this depends on strategy.

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The Prime Minister (also Minister for Defence) has said that the interpretation of strategy into broad terms of production is working satisfactorily. Since evidence to the contrary is inconclusive, we are obliged to rely on the Prime Minister's assurance on this point—with the reservation that ignorance of the country's true industrial potential must prove an almost insurmountable obstacle to the formation of a true master-plan, such, for example, as the Gosplan of the Soviet State Planning Commission.

It is when it comes to execution that the state machinery begins audibly to creak. Instead of following the common-sense course of entrusting the translation of the strategic plan into production terms to one paramount authority or ministry having supreme authority over all the resources (plant, materials, labour, etc.) at the disposal of the State, the task is handed over to a number of independent depts.,e.g., Supply (mainly for army requirements), Admiralty and Ministry of Aircraft Production. As in the very different circumstances of the past, these set about it each in their own way, tend to compete vigorously for a limited industrial capacity and are repeatedly frustrated by their lack of authority over many of the different aspects of production. The Production Executive, presided over by Bevin, Minister of Labour with onerous departmental responsibilities, arose out of the need for a referee. But its work has been extended. And it is this Production Executive (composed of busy ministers and aided by several committees also in charge of equally busy, if junior, ministers) which is now apparently trying to co-ordinate the whole range of war production. Clearly the task is beyond its powers, although it is assisted by a number of miscellaneous committees. The effectiveness of its efforts must depend largely on such accidents as the efficiency or incompetence of the specialised committees who do the work and the outside interference they encounter.

To take two of these, the Raw Materials Committee (which allocates raw materials quarterly to the various depts.) is said to be working well. But the Industrial Capacity Committee which is supposed to divide up capacity between the different depts and eliminate idle capacity in the industrial areas in co-operation with Advisory Regional Boards, is reputed to have been an almost complete failure. Only in the S.E. region is it claimed that any real progress has been made in coping with the idle capacity problem—through the establishment of a sort of "capacity clearing house." Another committee, the Import Executive, is concerned with ordering all supplies from abroad and comprises the President of the Board of Trade, as chairman, and representatives of the service depts. The Raw Materials Committee seems, paradoxically, to have no say in deciding what shall be imported.

Despite the resistance to full co-ordination of the Governmental machinery for securing maximum production, it is interesting to note that the inexorable pressure of events has already imposed its stamp.

These rudimentary attempts at planning and co-ordination, which are nevertheless welcome, are severely handicapped by the practice of appointing leading monopolists and interested parties to controlling positions. Such persons naturally have a strong bias towards preserving the peace-time structure of the industry concerned and maintaining pre-war customs, which are often intolerably wasteful in war, because the controllers tend to think in terms of the position after the war. Thus, the figures of the quantities of steel available for allocation by the Production Executive are provided by the Steel Control which before the war was the monopoly of the Iron and Steel Federation. It is in the long-term interests of this monopoly to perpetuate most of the restrictive and hampering characteristics which it imposed in peace-time. Concern for the post-war position (when, presumably, it is hoped to resume imports of high-grade ores from Spain and Scandinavia) is preventing the proper exploitation of low-grade home ores, of which there are enormous reserves. The collection and demolition of scrap is kept in the hands of a close ring. The peace-time monopoly frame of mind is still expressed in under-capacity working, relatively low production and relatively high prices. For the same reasons the industry is resisting any increase in blast-furnace capacity. This attitude is particularly serious as the structure of the steel industry is such that far more raw steel could be used. Instead, output restriction becomes progressively more marked as the fabricating stages proceed. The most notorious case is Richard Thomas, where a modern plant is denied the capacity running needed to secure

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the economies for which it was designed so that the other, and less efficient plants within the ring can share the restricted trade. An independent steel control could also do much to economise transport by over-ruling special agreements, for the supply of materials and components between connected firms geographically distant. Steel is just one example of many.

Another severe handicap to the efficient organisation of production is the segregation in (or even entire absence from) the governmental machine of certain "functional" activities (such as labour supply, design, contracts and costing) and ancilliary depts closely bound up with the planning of modern war production such as transport, coal, power. Apart from the Admiralty (whose designers have apparently little more appreciation of the advantages of mass production methods than in the eighties of last century), the service depts. possess no really cohesive independent corps of designers capable of guiding specifications into the channels most suitable for high-speed mass production. Private, and often "interested" advice is largely relied upon since such independent Government men as are employed have usually little knowledge of production.

The effects of most organisational weaknesses come out in their most pernicious form in contracts. Here we have reached a situation where control, provided in peace-time mainly by competition or the threat of it, hardly exists. Each service dept. works as a separate autonomous unit, with its own contract branch relegated to a subordinate position. Although a co-ordinating body (Contracts Co-ordinating Committee) exists, it works indifferently since its powers are limited. It lacks standards which the collation and full use of past experience could provide. The widespread rivalry (which was much worse in the past) between the different depts. for the services of industries and individual contractors has encouraged a policy of indulgence with regard to contract terms in order to secure output at all costs. Hence the prevalence of contracts of the "cost plus" type which positively encourage waste and inefficiency.

What should be done? The basic principles of sound administration are evident enough. The British ruling class should study both the Soviet governmental structure and the organisation of any large American (or, for that matter, British) corporation. The needs are, first, a central planning authority, a sort of State Planning and Production Commission with paramount authority. This should have full power and adequate equipment for translating, on broad lines, the needs of strategy into economic and industrial practice.

Secondly, all departments, including the three Service Depts., should be made subordinate to this supreme economic body. Every function of administration (materials, tools and labour supply and allocation; design and specification; contracts and costing) and every ancillary activity (transport, distribution, coal, power) should come within its scope. Only in this way can the present conflict of authority and overlapping endeavour be finally eliminated. Departmentalisation by function must replace the present haphazard division of responsibility and each of the reorganised depts. must alone wield executive authority in its own sphere.

Third, the choice of personnel to man the re-organised depts. must exclude all interested parties and include the most highly qualified disinterested individuals available, regardless of social origin. And every individual should be in a position to devote the whole of his energies to the job with which he is entrusted.

Fourthly, the structure should aim at the maximum degree of decentralisation. Each administrative dept. should delegate to its local representatives the greatest measure of executive authority. And the organisation should be so arranged that these representatives of the heads of depts. co-ordinate their activities in the locality by coming together in area organisations on the same pattern as at the centre.

Such a set-up would not eliminate the separate service depts, or any other legitimate government body: although it would get rid of the many overlapping, confused and unco-ordinated committees, boards, and hole-in-the-corner statistical groups in which the adminisration rejoices. Indeed, it would require the creation of some entirely new, and very much lacking, functional depts. such as design and specification, contracts and costing, and, probably, a central statistical bureau. But it would relegate the various functions to their rightful place as servants of the authority responsible for the total production effort and give them undisputed dominion over the whole of their legitimate field. The embryo of the local production organisa-

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tion suggested is at present to be found in the Regional Boards. Despite their high-sounding title, these have only advisory powers and, far from being in a position to achieve anything positive, they tend to provide a blanket for smothering complaints. Live regional boards with executive powers would be composed of the best men in the locality actively engaged in production, including works managers and shop stewards.

Such organisation would open the way for a widespread change in the contract system. The principle of the pre-costed fixed price contract should be extended to the maximum extent. The difficulties have been exaggerated. The uses of the various other types are relatively limited, e.g., when the work is new, or novel, impossible clearly to measure or define beforehand (as sometimes in ship and other repairs) or when the utmost speed is needed. Given a properly organised designs dept. and a contracts and costing dept., the basis for fixed price contracts over a very high proportion of the war production field would be laid. The History of the Ministry of Munitions (Vol. III, pt. II, p. 16) states: "The controller of contracts estimated that by the end of 1917, reliable data existed of the cost of articles representing probably three-fourths of the Ministry's purchases in the United Kingdom." The Select Committee (Fourth Rept., 1940-41, p. 10) comments: "If depts. are making full use of the figures and experience gained not only during a year—now two years—of war, but during the preceding period of armament expansion, there seems no reason why the state of affairs in 1917 should not now be bettered."

Whether the contract was of fixed price or any other type, a valuable check would be provided by the fullest public knowledge throughout the production unit, factory, site, etc., of its precise nature and terms. Representatives of the workers should be fully appraised and allowed to see the accounts and costings.

One of the greatest snags in the present system, of "cost plus" and similar contracts, is dependence on post costing. In theory, post costing may be possible. In practice, the whole accounting profession of the entire world could hardly cope with the mountain of work which has piled up as more and more contractors have been drawn into Government work on contracts of infinite variety and complexity. Nowhere is simplification through co-ordination so much needed as in the counting house. No single measure would infuse more efficiency into the national war effort than the wholesale substitution of pre-costing and price fixing for "cost plus" and post-costing. To get it we need a unified production administration.

Transport is so important a servant of production in war-time that whoever is in charge of production should have full control over the carriage of goods and passengers. Continued private control of, and competition between, the railways could never survive the creation of a rational state machine for planned production. If the railways were taken over and run as a national service under the ultimate control of a production ministry, both they and the other forms of transport could begin to play their full part in the war effort. Only in this way is it possible finally to eliminate the present uneconomic hauls and counter-hauls, the jealous snatching of business it is unable to cope with first by one line and then by another, and to end the persistent, if polite, sabotage of carriage by road and canal by the rail interests.

While the case for bringing shipping within the control of a unified production programme is not quite so strong it is necessary to stress the need for fully utilising existing tonnage. Particulars are withheld, but there are good grounds for believing that much British and British-controlled shipping is being used to safeguard export and carrying trade in safe waters. Victory should come first and post-war trade and profits definitely second.*

The counterpart to the full use of

* On June 4 last the U.S. Maritime Commission announced an agreement under which all British shipping services from N. America to Australasia would be taken over by U.S. vessels—"releasing dozens of British ships for the war effort" (Reuter). London tried to minimise the importance of the deal, suggesting there were few British ships remaining in the Pacific. But Lloyds List (5.6.41) supposed that "only cargo vessels are concerned" and that "liners may be brought into the scheme later." Sir R. Cross, former Minister of Shipping, now High Commmissioner to Australia, said on July 16 that negotiations were proceeding in Washington for substituting American vessels for British in the Pacific ("Times," 17.7.41). Quite recently the U.S. Maritime Union estimated that 8,000,000 tons of British shipping was being used outside the war effort, including 200 5,000 ton vessels plying between safe ports and S. America.

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available tonnage and the co-ordination of inland transport is a clean-up at the docks, an improvement in dock workers' conditions and the redistribution of quayside equipment (e.g. from East coast to West) to meet war-time changes in the flow of port traffic. If control of transport were entrusted to those charged with planning and guiding production as a whole, scandals on the present scale could never arise.

Nor would the present anarchy in the coalfields be tolerated if there were any sort of comprehensive production plan. Primarily this is due to the attempt to preserve the peacetime structure of the industry based on quotas for restricting output, contracts concluded without regard to war transport difficulties, a large export market (now vanished) and almost complete freedom of action for the mineowners. And the governmental machinery for dealing with the mining of coal (the prime mover of the arms drive) is a sub-department of the Board of Trade! Hence the fantastic position to-day: an industry having lost three-quarters of a huge export trade is nevertheless unable to supply the needs of the home market.

No minister charged with planning production would put up with this for a day. He would immediately recognise the urgent need for a national board, including representatives of the mineworkers, with power to dictate where the coal shall be got, where it shall be allocated and the conditions under which its production could be maximised. He would give high priority to the steel and timber which the drive for increased output demands. Meanwhile, responsibility for providing this basic driving force of industry is entirely out of the hands of those charged with producing the planes, tanks and guns.

The building industry provides another glaring example of the chaos resulting from the lack of a centralised and co-ordinated production control at the top. At long last the Ministry of Works and Buildings, created only last October, is now beginning to get to grips with the main problems by registering builders (which it proposes to group "loosely" under regional "clearing houses" for the allocation of work, etc.), licensing all construction projects and allocating building capacity (of which it has, incidentally, no precise data) between the various departments. The departmental head, Lord Reith, has recently acquired some sort of power of veto over the project of any department which he considers will not contribute to the war effort (e.g. the now notorious "luxury" police station at Torquay): but he still has no direct control over the constructional activities of the main war depts. This is all the more serious since, compared with these other depts., the conduct of the Ministry of Works in relation to the projects under its direct jurisdiction (formerly Office of Works contracts) is exemplary. Despite the weaknesses of Lord Reith's dept.—materials controllers drawn from the ranks of the leading monopolists, the absence of a corps of Government-paid technicians to apply simplification, standardisation and modern scientific technique to this very backward industry—it does insist on contracts of the "fixed price" type. The Ministry of Works "schedule" contract which itemises the job or process and fixes the rate for each item, clearly demonstrates that it is possible to apply proper incentives over most of the constructional field even under war conditions. Other depts. have virtual autonomy within the scope of their allocation and use it to lavish "cost plus" contracts on inefficient and frequently corrupt contractors. Hence the prevalence of big scandals such as the military camps which cost over £80,000,000 instead of the estimated £21,000,000, and the brick surface shelters, built with faulty materials, which tumbled down after a couple of sharp frosts last winter. The most urgent need in building, whether the Ministry of Works is eventually to be brought within a unified production set-up or not, is to centralise authority over all construction work in the ministry we already possess.

Anyone conversant with the key war industry, engineering and aircraft production is only too familiar with the frustration caused by the present conflict of authority and lack of planning. He can easily envisage the new vigour which would grip the whole industry if the commonsense reforms which have been briefly outlined were carried through. The removal from the controls of the interested parties and the proved "duds" would put new heart into every works manager genuinely striving for maximum production. It is abundantly clear that the intelligent handling of design—by a disinterested corps of designers with real knowledge of the production problems of the man on the job—and a planned flow of orders would bring immediate improvement. Efficiency could

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in a large measure, be restored by abolishing contracts of the post-costing type entirely. Costing in the engineering industry, if tackled on common-sense lines, is relatively simple if only the men who know are consulted. Years of bargaining over piece rates have made every shop steward an expert. Any junior clerk can cost materials. Accumulated experience, if it were only collated and used, should by now have made loading for overheads almost rule of thumb for any given type of work. It *is* possible to fix contract prices in advance over the major part of the field and fix them at keen prices. If any contractor says he can't turn out the goods at the standard or scientifically pre-determined price, there is always Regulation 78, which empowers the Government, after having put in a controller, to take over, lock, stock and barrel, any firm which is considered obstructionist. And there are many workers at the benches and lathes who would make as good, if not far better, managers, individually or collectively, than a large proportion of those now holding managerial positions. Sufficient testimony is the magnificent equipment of the Red Army and Air Force.

Dialectical Materialism and Modern Science

III.—Quantity and Quality

by J. B. S. HALDANE, F.R.S.

THE transformation of quantity into quality, and conversely, was regarded by Marx and Engels as a fundamental dialectical process. Marx states one aspect of it very clearly, when writing of the relation between small savings and capital. "Here," we read, "as in natural science, is verified the correctness of the law discovered by Hegel in his 'Logic' that merely quantitative changes beyond a certain point pass into qualitative differences." Engels used the phrase to describe four slightly different facts. The "transformation" could either be a process actually undergone by a material system, as when the taut rope parts under the pull, or a change found as we pass, in thought or perception, along a series of things which can exist at the same time, such as the paraffins. He also applied it both to gradual changes such as the melting of waxes, which have no definite melting point, and very sharp ones such as the melting of ice. Doubtless a sudden transformation of an object or system shows the principle in its sharpest form.

The mechanics of Galileo and Newton were based on the ideas of continuous space, time and motion, and the contradictions inherent in the latter, pointed out by Zeno and others, were ignored. The classical mechanics could explain some sudden changes. For example, it was clear why a stick suddenly fell when it was gradually pushed off a table, and it was hoped that all sudden changes would be explicable in this sort of way. However classical mechanics have been unable to explain such simple phenomena as the breaking of a bar, or the boiling of a kettle. By explanation I do not, of course, mean merely verbal explanation, but numerical explanation, which would enable us to calculate, say, the boiling point of water from simple properties of hydrogen and oxygen atoms.

During the present century it has become clear that only some of the laws of classical mechanics apply to atoms. They apply to large bodies consisting of many billion atoms simply because they are statistical consequences of the pooled motion of many atoms. This fact was predicted two thousand years ago in Epicurus' and Lucretius' doctrine of *clinamen*, according to which atoms showed a less regular behaviour than larger bodies. They do this because, under some circumstances at least, motion is only transferred to or from an atom in definite quantities, whereas according to classical mechanics it could be transferred continuously. In particular angular momentum, or spin, is only transferred in definite units, or quanta, which are the same for all atomic events. An atom can exist in a number of different states, with different spins. And

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these states are qualitatively different. An atom with more than the minimum spin is liable to give out a flash of light. It is generally more active chemically than one with less spin, and so on. In fact, the transformation, and what is more, the abrupt transformation, of quantity into quality, is, at least at the level to which modern physicists have penetrated, a fundamental property of matter. Many continuous changes depend on this sharp type of change, and not the other way round.

The action of the nervous system, both in sensation and voluntary or reflex action, is based on the same principle. Every cell in the nervous or muscular system, and very probably every gland cell, too, has a threshold of excitability, that is to say a minimum stimulus which is needed before it can do anything.

Further, the activity of a cell is seldom graded. A muscle fibre contracts with all its available energy, or not at all. A nerve fibre either does nothing, or transmits a unit impulse which is no stronger, and travels no faster, if the stimulus which starts it is greatly increased. Graded activity of an organ is possible by altering the number of units, for example muscle fibres contracting at any moment, or the frequency with which each contracts. In the case of a muscle fibre a sufficiently rapid series of stimuli, each of which would cause a twitch, lead to a steady contraction.

On these principles we are beginning to understand some of the processes involved in simple sensation. A number of sensory nerves end in knobs which are sensitive to pressure. A very light pressure on such a knob may cause only a single impulse to travel along the fibre towards the brain. A moderate pressure will cause a series of impulses, at first frequent, then slowing down. A greater pressure is translated into a more rapid series, also slowing down in the end. The same seems to be true for more complicated sense organs. Our whole knowledge of the external world, and our whole action on it, depends on the numbers of nervous impulses going in and out through a few million nerve fibres. These impulses are all of the same nature, chemical changes with accompanying electrical potentials of a few millivolts. They do not seem to differ qualitatively according to whether they are destined to cause sensations of sound or warmth, pain or pleasure, or even secretion or motion. The whole qualitative richness of the external world, or of a philosopher's or poet's mind, is transformed into quantity at this level.

The change back to quality on the way inwards is only partly understood. But it depends on thresholds which vary qualitatively as well as quantitatively. Each sensory nerve fibre connects with a number of cells in the spinal cord or brain, from which more fibres arise. A large number of impulses arriving at once along fibres from the same part, as when a blow is given, will excite the relatively sluggish cells concerned in a reflex action such as withdrawing a limb. Even strong stimulation of a single end organ in the skin can probably never start a reflex, and rarely reaches consciousness. Repeated impulses along one fibre will stimulate nerve cells which do not respond to single stimuli. Simultaneous impulses from a number will stimulate cells which do not respond to repeated stimuli from one fibre, and so on. Thus as we travel up the central nervous system towards the cerebral cortex the nervous activity comes more and more to represent patterns of stimuli in the external world. And finally in the cerebral cortex the relevant patterns correspond to material objects, words, and so on, so that we are directly aware of these, and not of the series of points of pressure or colour, or isolated elements of sound, into which some philosophers have tried to analyse our perceptions.

The transformation of quantity into quality on the way out, involved in skilled muscular movement, will perhaps be easier to investigate, but has been less studied. This is probably because physiologists have so far been under the influence of philosophies which regarded sensation as more important than action—as indeed it is for a leisured class. When we know in detail how the impulses coming down the arm nerves are translated into skilled hand work we shall probably obtain many clues to the converse transformation of quantity into quality in the brain.

The transformation of quantity into quality is very clearly shown in the course of evolution. Suppose the linear dimensions of an animal to be increased 10 times, but its shape unchanged, then its bulk is increased a thousand times, but its surface only 100 times. Thus if its chemical changes go on at the same rate, each area of gut must pass in 10 times as much food per day, each area of lung or gill 10 times as much oxygen,

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and so on. So the animal will only be able to live an active life if the area of the gut is increased by coiling it, throwing its surface into numerous projections, and so on. Similarly the gills and lungs must become more complex, the circulation must become more efficient, and so on. In fact, it is probably truer to say that the most advanced animals are complicated because they are large, than that they are large because they are complicated.

Many more examples might be given, but I will end on a personal note. It is often said that Marxism is somewhat of a pose in scientists who adopt it, and does not influence their research. During the nineteenth century it was found that many gases could be liquefied by cold, and Engels, among others, predicted that a quantitative change of temperature would lead to a sharp qualitative change of state in all of them. However scientists, whether or not they are materialists, were almost all unduly mechanistic. Qualities such as taste or smell were thought less real than quantitatively measurable characters such as density. Now a gas such as hydrogen sulphide with a strong smell, or carbon dioxide with a strong taste, is inodorous and tasteless until it reaches a certain concentration, which is the threshold for the human sense organs. The threshold is best measured as partial pressure. Hydrogen sulphide is first smelt at a pressure of about a millionth of an atmosphere, carbon dioxide first tasted at a pressure of about a fifth. It is obvious that a gas such as oxygen, which has no smell or taste when breathed pure at a pressure of one atmosphere, may yet be perceptible at higher pressures.

It was not, however, obvious to a number of scientists who had been at a pressure of six atmospheres, corresponding to 170 feet of sea water, because they recognized the transformation of quantity into quality in special cases, but not as a general principle, or believed in the "lesser reality," to use a phrase of Lenin's, of smell and taste as compared with shape and rigidity. So I was the first person to taste oxygen. At six atmospheres' pressure it tastes like rather flat ginger beer. At higher pressures it may perhaps develop a smell. This simple example shows that the law of the transformation of quantity into quality is not merely a convenient summary of a number of previously discovered facts (though both the quantum theory and the thresholds of nerve cells were discovered after Engels' death) but a living and fruitful guide to actual scientific discovery.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Red Army and the Finnish War

The Red Army Moves. By Geoffrey Cox. (Gollancz. 16/-).
The Soviet-Finnish Campaign. By Major A. S. Hooper. (Colletts' 3d.).

How often in discussing the chances of the Red Army in the present war one is confronted with such a question as: "Well, how was it they did so badly in Finland?" The general impression of Soviet military weakness, for which the reporting of that campaign was responsible, has had a considerable political effect in the past twelve months. While many people had from one source or another obtained facts to refute the usual libels, we have now for the first time just the comprehensive evidence we have wanted most. Firstly in Major Hooper's excellent conspectus of the campaign, and secondly in Geoffrey Cox's much fuller treatment, written though it is from a somewhat hostile point of view.

Cox, like the prophet Balaam, sets out to curse, but is constrained to bless. That is the value of the book. With a certain naiveté he first blurts out all the usual allegations and then finds himself contradicting them. Thus he sets out to describe the brutal and deliberate bombing of civilians in Helsinki, as if he himself really believed it, but after stating the facts, with an honesty and objectivity which is one of the best features of the book, he concludes: "It was not an example of indiscriminate bombing. There was no careless scattering of bombs regardless of targets. Nor was there any deliberate attempt to sow them in a purely civilian area." He goes on to say that the absence of further air raid casualties in Helsinki may have been due to the excellent shelters or to the fact that there were no more raids on the city itself, he is not quite sure which!

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He sets out to prove the wanton aggression of the Soviet Union, but his exposure of Mannerheim and Wallenius, his account of the attacks on Leningrad in 1919, through the Baltic, his own admission of "close relations between the Finnish and German General Staffs," and of the fact that Germany actually sold the Finns war supplies from conquered Poland last year, indicate clearly the reasons for the Russian action.

His criticism of the way the Press reported the war is devastating. He admits that most of it was deliberate anti-Soviet propaganda. He confesses that "we had no real knowledge of what was happening on the fronts," his own success in getting pretty near the real thing being achieved in the face of official hostility and prohibition. He tells us that Mannerheim himself intervened to expel a journalist who reported that the Russians were not bombing civilians.

Finally, after filling three-quarters of the book with long accounts of Soviet set-backs in Northern Finland, he himself admits that in point of fact these were only "side-shows," and that their journalistic exploitation gave undue importance to a minor phase of the war so that the 46-day assault of the Mannerheim Line was completely overshadowed. He also admits that these northern "Soviet attacks had drawn away thousands of men from the Mannerheim Line and men who were to be badly needed during the vital month of February." He points to the colossal Finnish losses in attacking the Soviet "islands," and admits that exhaustion here, no less than on the Mannerheim Line, was to force the Finns to make peace.

His account of the Line itself shows its immense strength. Military authorities and the higher command, he says, were certain it would hold out. The experts were still ridiculing the Russian efforts even in February, a few weeks before its collapse. He makes it clear that the assault was brilliantly planned and executed, that the material was excellent and plentiful. Shells rained on the Line at the rate of 300,000 a day. The Russians showed a thorough knowledge of infiltration tactics. Finally, by a superb and most unexpected manœuvre they turned the Line as well as breached it by an advance over the ice of the frozen Gulf of Finland.

In summing up the campaign, Cox discounts the prisoners' tales, of which Citrine and Noel Baker made so much. It was impossible, he says, to get them to attack the Soviet régime. He rebuts the allegations of poor equipment. The Red Army, he says, was very well provided with modern weapons. Two telescope rifles to every squad of ten men, and one light machine gun and one automatic rifle for every ten men. Regimental artillery had more guns than in the British and French armies. The Finns greatly admired the new 1939 rifle. Tanks were excellent, though unsuitable for conditions of extremely low temperatures and inevitably vulnerable to mines hidden in a second beneath the snow. The uniforms of the earlier captives were quite as good as the French Army uniforms, though not warm enough for the exceptional cold of the 1940 winter. He recognises that the invasion took place under conditions which no army has ever faced before.

Major Hooper performs a particularly useful service in pointing out that the columns advancing into Finland from Lake Ladoga to Petsamo may well have been intended as a diversion to make possible the main assault on the Mannerheim Line. Though some of the columns were overwhelmed, "Red pressure was maintained all the time and even occasional advances were made." If the defeats had been as heavy as was claimed, the whole invasion would have been broken and the pressure relieved. This never took place.

He then gives the first full account of the great offensive which began on February 1st, and continued without slackening or intermission until the Red Army entered Viborg on March 13th. "The speed and weight of the offensive never slackened: on the contrary it increased, in accordance with the principles of the Red Army." Allied assistance, which was considerable, and German supplies alike failed to stem the tide. Half the army was still resisting the "annihilated," "captured" and "utterly defeated" northern columns. Mannerheim surrendered.

This admirable pamphlet makes clear the methods, training, equipment and staff work which we have already seen once again in the present war. It is a pamphlet to buy by the dozen and pass around among friends and enquirers. It should be of the greatest interest to members of the British armed forces, to whom it should afford considerable encouragement and not a little instruction.

J. L.

A History of Trade Unions

British Trade Unionism: An outline history by Allen Hutt (pp 160 Lawrence & Wishart, 28/6).

A short history of this kind has been sorely needed, not only for the use of the organised workers, but also for the instruction of the whole wider movement of the mass of the people. But it is not a thing easily done, as witness the many derelict attempts. Now Allen Hutt has succeeded admirably, and in the briefest compass, in giving the significant facts which every trade unionist should know about the past of the movement of which he or she is a member. It would be well if every branch official, every shop steward, and indeed, every entrant to a union were the

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possessor of such a book as this ; it would enormously increase their grasp of the problems to be tackled, and double their fighting capacity.

Maximum compression, combined with clearness and succinct statement make it also a first-rate text-book ; which could be studied in classes formed in the workshop or out of the trade union branch, and for which each of its ten chapters would provide full material for an educational discussion. Unlike so many " histories up-to-date," which often taper off as they approach contemporary times and fade away into a few meaningless generalities, Hutt's book is two-thirds of it devoted to this century and over half of it to the last twenty-five years.

Before this last period, the history is divided into three periods: the first (The Unions as " Schools of War ") from 1800 to 1850 ; the second (" Defence, not Defiance ") from 1850 to 1880 ; and third from the 'eighties up to the outbreak of the last war in August, 1914. This is probably the most correct periodisation for British trade unionism, though it is not quite the same as that of the Webb's, and though there is always room for discussion as to the fringes where one period is passing into another, and about the sub-divisions of each period.

It is inspiring reading, the story of the early struggles of the first half of the 19th century ; and Hutt brings it to life by telling quotations from the utterances of the times as well as by his summary of the main events. Thereafter, and throughout, his use of quotation from the actors in the struggle, vivifies the history and raises it to a higher level than that of mere narrative. In addition he is able, in the second half of the century, to illuminate events by the contemporary comments of Marx and Engels ; and in the early years of this century by the comments of Lenin, who took care to deal with each significant happening in the British working class movement.

Hutt, however avoids the error of earlier attempts where a mass of quotations tended to present the history almost as the views of Marx and Engles upon contemporary struggles. He avoids this because he verifies their views by stuffing each chapter with facts, while each fact is given with date and other references complete. Indeed, one of the things to remark on is the number of facts (only possible through wide reading and study of original documents) for which he finds room in his pages ; and which, in the last chapters, where personal experience is added, become like a spreading torrent, abruptly breaking off in January of this year. In a second edition is should be possible not only to carry through the revision and additions that would be necessary in the last chapter, but also to add some conclusions.

Following on this history and largely on the basis of the facts which it gives, there is a need for a detailed interpretation of the stage now reached by British Trade Unionism. The present situation, just because it is so pregnant for the future, makes it possible (and now necessary) to look back over the last twenty years and for much theoretical work to be done, perhaps in the form of essays, to establish just what is the key to the coming development of trade unions in Britain.

R. P. A.

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Donations received during August, 1941 :

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Pride goeth before a fall, they say. We were, we think, justly proud of the splendid collections in June and July, but do not think we deserved the very nasty jolt represented by this month's fall. The total of donations received up to the 15th of the month when we must go to press is less than half of last month, and just a third of the Birthday total. It is even less than the collection taken at the Birthday Gala.

Now this is a very serious setback in our work. But you will say : "You only had £56 in May and you were very pleased with that." Yes, in January, 1940, we only had £8 14s., and were very pleased with that. But as our circulation grows, and the number of our Discussion Groups grows, so do our organisational expenses grow ; and the very minute we get an extra £50 or £100, we spend it immediately where it is most needed—groups, advertising, meetings. And now we have to curtail that expenditure.

We are asking our groups to run meetings on Russia. All those that have been held have been enormously successful. Everybody wants to know about Russia, so everybody goes to the meetings. Help us to put more power behind this drive by sending us the cash to work with. Make your money fight Fascism.

One very satisfactory feature about this month's Fund, however, is the greatly increased number of Discussion Groups that have sent in donations. That is as it should be : we thank them, and congratulate them, and ask them to keep it up.

This is a real S.O.S. An extra £100 a month represents just the difference between being able to do the development work we want to, and not being able. Ours is a true DEVELOPMENT FUND. See that it develops. It is up to YOU.

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